

חומש ויקרא

THE TORAH

*With an Interpolated English Translation
and Commentary Based on the Works of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*
וצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

Chumash Vayikra
The Book of Leviticus

Parshat Emor



Kehot Publication Society
770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11213
5772/2012

THE TORAH - CHUMASH VAYIKRA

WITH AN INTERPOLATED ENGLISH TRANSLATION
AND COMMENTARY BASED ON THE WORKS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

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Chabad of California

A project of
Chabad of California
741 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024
310-208-7511 / Fax 310-208-5811

Published by
Kehot Publication Society
770 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11213
718-774-4000 / Fax 718-774-2718
editor@kehot.com

Order Department:
291 Kingston Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11213
718-778-0226 / Fax 718-778-4148
www.kehot.com

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ISBN: 978-0-8266-0193-3
ISBN: 978-0-8266-0195-2 (set)

Published in the United States of America



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Overview

Parashat Emor comprises two major topics: the first is the sanctity required of the priests and the sacrifices, and the second is the calendar of the festivals. These are followed by three minor topics: the lighting of the Candelabrum, the weekly replacement of the showbread, and the incident of the blasphemer.

The first collection of laws concerns only the priestly caste—and indeed, is addressed to them specifically¹—while the second is central to the life of the entire nation. As we know, the fact that both these topics are contained within the same *parashah* indicates that despite their apparent unrelatedness, they have a common denominator, and that this common denominator is expressed by the name of the *parashah*.

The name of the *parashah*, *Emor*, means “say.” As we know, the usual formula God uses when communicating His commands in the Torah is: “*Speak* to the Israelites, and say to them...,” prefacing the command to *say* with a command to *speak*.

In Hebrew, the words for “saying” and “speaking” carry different nuances of meaning. “Speaking” is “hard speech,” a straightforward, objective expression of the message to be conveyed, emphasizing the accuracy and precision of the content, and no more. In contrast, “saying” is “soft speech,” a subjective tailoring of the message reflecting full consciousness of its intended recipient, in order to facilitate effective communication.²

According to tradition, the unusual double expression with which this *parashah* opens—“*Say* to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and *say* to them...” —means that Moses is not only to deliver God’s message to the priests; he is also to enjoin the elder priests to instruct the younger priests. As we will see,³ this is the Torah’s first injunction regarding education. Although this injunction is addressed to the priestly caste, we are all called upon to be “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,”⁴ and thus, God’s imperative that the “elders” educate the “youth” applies to all of us. Whenever we see in someone else a behavior or attitude that is in need of edification or correction, we are ipso facto immediately cast—by Divine providence—in the role of educator. In this sense, we may play the part of teacher

1. “Say to the priests...” (21:1); “Say to Aaron...” (21:17, 22:1, 22:18).

2. Phonetically, both *emor* (“say”) and *daber* (“speak”) end with the same letter (*reish*). But the two first letters of *emor* are “soft”—an *alef*, which is almost a vowel, and the smooth, labial *mem*—while the two first letters of *daber* are “hard”—the dental *dalet* and the plosive *beit*, both made hard by the *dagesh*.

3. On 21:1.

4. Exodus 19:6, “priests” being an alternative translation of the word in this verse (כהנים) that according to Rashi *ad loc.* is translated “nobles.”

not only when educating our students, but in dealing with our colleagues, our children, or ourselves, as well.

The implication, therefore, is that education—in all its contexts—must be carried out primarily with “soft speech”; in order to be effective, educators must empathize fully with their charges and tailor their style of delivery accordingly.⁵

Furthermore, we may infer from the repetitive “say...and say...” that in order for our educative efforts to be effective, we must make full and extensive use of our power of speech. Even though our sages have enjoined us to “say little and do much”⁶ and that “I did not find anything better for the body than silence,”⁷ this means that we should ensure that our speech carry content and that we avoid unnecessary repetition.⁸

The essential ingredient of effective education through “soft speech” is praising the student. All our potential “students” possess infinite, latent good; by praising the good, we draw these positive qualities out of them, thus allowing them to actualize their potential to a far greater extent than they could have done by themselves.

To be sure, when we assume the role of educator we must be fully aware of the spiritual state of those whom Divine providence has placed in our care, assessing their failings and shortcomings honestly and objectively. However, we must at the same time give them the benefit of the doubt, attributing their misdeeds to the circumstances of their lives.⁹ Judging them in this way does not absolve them from the guilt of having succumbed to temptation, because God only places people in difficult situations if He has given them in advance the necessary strength of character to overcome such situations. If they fail to do so, it is because this God-given inner strength has not been allowed to manifest itself as it should have—and the reason for that is because we, who are responsible for educating our charges, have not praised them enough! Had we used our “soft speech” as much as we should have, we would have elicited our charges’ latent potential and inner strength.

All educators should thus assume personal responsibility for the moral failures of their charges.



What is unique about the Jewish festivals is that it is the Jewish people who sanctify their dates. Whereas the holiness of the Sabbath is fixed—every seventh day being the Sabbath regardless of any act on our part—the dates of the festivals, by which we sanctify time, are fixed only after the Jewish people—as represented by the rabbinical court—determines when the month begins.

The cycle of the festivals, the sanctification of appointed meeting-times with God, is thus a further expression of the potency of speech, its power to influence and determine reality. By pronouncing a specific day the first of the new month, the Jewish people use their power of speech to “educate” time, to grant it a sense of holiness it would not otherwise possess—or rather, to reveal its intrinsic holiness that would otherwise remain hidden and latent.

As for the last three topics of this *parashah*, the first two—the Candelabrum and the show-

5. This idea is developed in depth in Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch’s essay *Kelalei HaChinuch VehoHadrachah* (translated into English as *The Principles of Education and Guidance*) on his father (Rabbi Shalom Dovber of Lubavitch)’s philosophy of education.

6. *Avot* 1:15.

7. *Ibid.* 1:17.

8. Cf. *Pesachim* 3b: “One should always teach his students in a concise manner.”

9. *Tanya*, chapter 30.

bread—can be considered a postscript to the section on the festivals, transferring the periodic inspiration of the festivals into the daily ritual of the Temple. The closing topic of the *parashah*, the incident of the blasphemer and his punishment, is clearly a dramatic illustration of the improper use of speech and its consequences. Only because speech possesses real power is such grave importance attached to its misuse.

Thus, after being told in *parashat Kedoshim* that Divine consciousness—sanctity—can indeed penetrate all facets of reality, we are told in *parashat Emor* exactly how much power we have to accomplish this goal. As “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” we have the power to affect and even determine reality through the proper use of speech, educating both our own, inner “youth” as well as our actual youth toward holiness, and imprinting time with holiness, as well.¹⁰

10. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 27, pp. 158 ff; *Hitva'aduyot* 5742, pp. 1421 ff.

— ONKELOS —

21:1 ואמר יי למשה אמר לכהניא בני אהרן ותימר להון על מית לא יסתאב בעמיה: 2 אלהין לקריבה דקריב לה לאמה ולאבוהי ולבריה ולברתה ולאחיה: 3 ולאחיה בתלתא דקריבא לה די לא הות לגבר לה יסתאב: 4 לא יסתאב רבא בעמיה לאחיה: 5 לא ימרטון מרט ברישון ופאתא דדקנהון לא יגלחון ובכשרהון לא יחלון חבול:

21:1 ויאמר יהוה אל-משה אמר אל-הכהנים בני אהרן ואמרת אליהם לנפש לא-יטמא בעמיו: 2 כי אם-לשאריו הקרב אליו לאמו ולאביו ולבנתו ולאחיו: 3 ולאחותו הבתולה הקרובה אליו אשר לא-היתה לאיש לה יטמא: 4 לא יטמא בעל בעמיו להחלו: 5 לא-יקרחה (יקרחו) קרחה בראשם ופאת זקנם לא יגלחו ובכשרם לא ישרטו שרטת:

— RASHI —

הראש? תלמוד לומר: "בראשם". וילמדו ישראל מהכהנים בגיגרה שנה: נאמר כאן "קרחה" ונאמר להלן בישראל "קרחה", מזה כאן כל הראש, אף להלן כל הראש במשמע, כל מקום שיקרח בראש. ומזה להלן על מת, אף כאן על מת: ופאת זקנם לא יגלחו. לפי שנאמר בישראל: "ולא תשחית", יכול לקטו במלקט וברהיטני? לכה נאמר: "לא יגלחו", שאינו חיבב אלא על דבר הקרוי "גלוח" ויש בו השחתה, וזהו תער: ובכשרם לא ישרטו שרטת. לפי שנאמר בישראל: "ושרט לנפש לא תתנו", יכול שרט חמש שריטות לא יהא חיבב אלא אחת? תלמוד לומר: "לא ישרטו שרטת", לחיבב על כל שריטה ושריטה, שתבה זו יתרה היא לדרש, שהיה לו לכתב: "לא ישרטו" ואני יודע שהיא "שרטת".

1 אמר אל הכהנים. "אמר ואמרת", להזהיר גדולים על הקטנים: בני אהרן. יכול חללים? תלמוד לומר: "הכהנים": בני אהרן. אף בעלי מומין במשמע: בני אהרן. ולא בנות אהרן: לא יטמא בעמיו. בעוד שהמת בתוך עמיו, יצא מת מצוה: 2 כי אם לשאריו. אין "שאריו" אלא אשתו: 3 הקרובה. לרבות את הארוסה: אשר לא היתה לאיש. למשכב: לה יטמא מצוה: 4 לא יטמא בעל בעמיו להחלו. לא יטמא לאשתו פסולה, שהוא מחלל בה בעודה עמו. וכן פשוטו של מקרא: "לא יטמא בעל" בשאריו, בעוד שהוא "בתוך עמיו", שיש לה קוברין, שאינה מת מצוה. ובאיזה שאר אמרתי? באותו שהוא "להחלו", להתחלל הוא מכהנתו: 5 לא יקרחה קרחה. על מת. והלא אף ישראל הזהירו על כך? אלא, לפי שנאמר בישראל: "בין עיניכם", יכול לא יהא חיבב על כל

1. דברים יד, א. 2. דברים יד, א. 3. ויקרא יט, כו. 4. שם, כח.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

It is thus clear that the Torah takes education for granted, relying on the example set by our forefather Abraham, for which God chose him to be the progenitor of the Jewish people.¹² In this context, it postpones the mention of education until this point in order to teach us some specific lessons.

We note firstly that the sages refer to the priests' duty to educate their children as their responsibility "to caution" them,¹³ the Hebrew word for which (להזהיר) also means "to make shine."¹⁴ This implies that rather than being content with setting an elementary educational standard for our youth or training them in the perfunctory observance of the commandments, we should teach them to perform the commandments optimally, even beyond the letter of the law, so that they—both the commandments and the children—sparkle.

This lesson is emphasized by the fact that the Torah teaches it to us through its instruction to the priests.

The priests' task is to help others rise spiritually and become close to God (through the sacrificial service); so too, we should strive to educate our youth not to merely be well versed in the Torah and punctilious in observing its commandments, but through this study and observation draw close to God.

Secondly, this lesson appears in the Book of Leviticus—more of whose content is devoted to the exposition of God's commandments than is that of any of the other books of the Torah¹⁵—and specifically toward the end of this book, after most of the laws of the Torah have been given (inasmuch as the commandments recorded in the Books of Numbers and Deuteronomy were also given at Mount Sinai). This suggests that this emphasis in education should be all-encompassing and predicated on our basic commitment to study and observance.

Finally, this message appears in *parashat Emor*, which contains the commandment of counting the

12. Genesis 18:19. 13. Yevamot 114a ff. 14. Likutei Torah 2:35b. 15. See Overview to *parashat Vayikra*.

Restrictions and Respect for Priests

21:1 God said to Moses: “Say the following laws to the priests. These laws will apply to all the male descendants of Aaron, including those who are disqualified from the priesthood on account of a bodily defect—as will be detailed later¹—but excluding those who are disqualified from the priesthood on account of the circumstances of their birth or marriage—as will be described presently.² Instruct them to say these laws to their children, in order to train them, as well, in their observance: ‘No one of you may ritually defile himself on account of a corpse.’³ This rule applies, however, only when the person dies among his people, i.e., in a place where there are lay-Israelites who can bury the corpse. If, however, a priest happens upon a corpse in a deserted area and there is no one else to tend to it, he must ritually defile himself in order to bury it.

2 Otherwise, he may not ritually defile himself for any dead person, **except for** (1) his wife—who, although not a blood relation, is nonetheless considered **his close relative**—(2) **his mother**, (3) **his father**, (4) **his son**, (5) **his daughter**, (6) **his brother**, 3 and (7) **his virgin sister**, even if she was betrothed⁴ when she died, as long as **she was still “close” to him** in that **she was not yet fully married to a man** and had therefore not yet left her family to live with her husband; if she satisfies these conditions, **he must defile himself for her**.

He must observe all the mourning practices that all Jews must observe for the death of a close relative.⁵ He must also not officiate as a priest—i.e., offer up sacrifices—while in mourning for these seven types of relatives; if he does so, the sacrifice will not be valid.⁶

4 As will be described presently,⁷ a priest may not marry certain categories of women. If he nonetheless does marry such a woman, he is temporarily disqualified from serving in the Tabernacle until he divorces her. Although it was just stated that a married priest must ritually defile himself for his wife, **a husband must not ritually defile himself for** a wife who caused **his temporary demotion** from active priesthood. As above, this restriction applies only if this wife died **among his people**, i.e., in a place where there are lay-Israelites who can bury her corpse. If, however, he happens upon her corpse in a deserted area and there is no one else to tend to it, he must ritually defile himself in order to bury it.

5 Like all other Jews, the priests **must not make a bald spot anywhere on their heads** as a sign of mourning for the dead,⁸ **nor may they shave any edge of the five edges of their beard** for any reason,⁹ **nor may they make cuts in their flesh** as a sign of mourning for the dead.¹⁰

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

1 In order to train them in their observance: Although the continuity and endurance of the Jewish people hinges on education,¹¹ the Torah does not mandate educating the young until here—fourteen *parashiot* after the giving of the Torah (in

parashat Yitro)—and even here, it mentions only the priests’ duty to educate their young, leaving us to infer that this duty devolves upon the rest of the people, as well.

1. Below, vv. 16-23. 2. Below, vv. 4, 7. 3. Numbers 19:11-16; see also Numbers 5:1-4, 9:6-14. 4. See the Introduction to vol. 1 of this edition of the Torah, p. xxviii, and on Numbers 30:7. 5. Above, 19:28. 6. Rashi on v. 12, below. 7. Below, vv. 7, 13-14. 8. Deuteronomy 14:1. 9. Above, 19:27. 10. Above, 19:28; Deuteronomy 14:1. 11. Y. *Sanhedrin* 10:2.

— ONKELOS —

6 קדישין יהון קדם אלהון ולא יחלון שמא דאלהון ארי ית קרבניא דיי קרבן אלהון אנו מקריבין ויהון קדישין: 7 אתתא מטעיא ומחללא לא יסבון ואתתא דמתרבא מבעלה לא יסבון ארי קדיש הוא קדם אלהה: 8 ותקדשנה ארי ית קרבן אלהה הוא מקרב קדיש יחי לה ארי קדיש אגא יי מקדשכון: 9 ובת גבר כהן ארי תתחל למטעי מקדשת אבנה היא מתחלא בנורא תתקוד: 10 וכהנא דאתרבא מאחיה דיתרק על רישה משקא דרבנותא ודי קריב ית קרבנה למלבש ית לבושיא ית רישה לא ירבי פרוע ולבושוהי לא יבוע:

6 קדשים יהיו לאלהיהם ולא יחללו שם אלהיהם כי את-אשי יהוה לחם אלהיהם הם מקריבם והיו קדש: 7 אשה זנה וחללה לא יקחו ואשה גרושה מאישה לא יקחו כִּי-קדש הוא לאלהיו: 8 וקדשתו כִּי-את-לחם אלהיה הוא מקריב קדש יהיה-לָהּ כִּי קדוש אני יהוה מקדשכם: 9 ובת איש כהן כִּי תתחל לזנות את-אביה היא מחללת באש תשרף: 10 והכהן הגדול מאחיו אשר-יוצק על-ראשו ישמן המשחה ומלא את-ידו ללבש את-הבגדים את-ראשו לא יפרע ובגדיו לא יפרם:

— RASHI —

לפתח ראשון בכך דבר ולברך ראשון בסעודה: 9 כִּי תתחל לזנות. כשתתחלל על ידי זנות, שהיתה בה זקת בעל וזנותה, או מן הארוסין או מן הנשואין. ורבתינו נחלקו בדרך, והכל מודים שלא דבר הכתוב בפנויה: את אביה היא מחללת. חללה ובזתה את כבודו, שאומרים עלי: ארור שו ילד, ארור שזו גדל: 10 לא יפרע. לא יגדל פרע על אב, ואיזהו גדול פרע, יותר משלשים יום:

6 קדשים יהיו. על כרחם יקדישום בית דין בכך: 7 זנה. שנבעלה בעילת ישראל האסור לה, כגון חיבי בריתות או נתין או ממזר: חללה. שנוקדה מן הפסולים שבכהנה, כגון: בת אלמנה מכהן גדול, או בת גרושה וחלוצה מכהן הדיוט, וכן שנתחללה מן הכהנה על ידי ביאת אחד מן הפסולים לכהנה: 8 וקדשתו. על כרחו, שאם לא רצה לגרש — הלקחו ויסדרו עד שיגרש: קדש יהיה לה. נהג בו קדשה,

5. סנהדרין נא, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

appropriate a commandment than counting the Omer to convey this message of optimal and shining cultivation of our children—of the child in years, the child in Jewish knowledge, and the child within each of us.³¹

10 The priest who has been elevated above his brothers: The Oral Torah³² notes that since this phrase can be read, “the priest who is the greatest [in wealth] of his brothers,” it implies that the high priest must be the wealthiest of the priests. Furthermore, since it can also be read, “the priest who is

~ A CLOSER LOOK ~

[7] A woman who is demoted: A woman falls into this category if:³³

- she is the daughter of a priest and a woman who is not permitted to marry a priest, i.e., the daughter of any priest and a divorcee, or of a high priest and a widow or a non-virgin.³⁴
- she is the daughter of a priest who had been demoted from the priesthood, either temporarily³⁵ or by birth.³⁶
- she is not permitted to marry a priest (e.g., be-

cause she is a divorcee or she had fornicated with someone she is not permitted to marry by Torah law, as stated in this verse) but nonetheless has relations with one.

- she is not permitted to marry a high priest (e.g., because she is a widow or non-virgin) but nonetheless has relations with one.

The women described in cases (c) and (d) are not allowed to marry the priest by whom they acquired their demoted status, nor any other priest.

31. Sefer HaSichot 5750, vol. 2, pp. 443-447. 32. Yoma 18a. 33. Mishneh Torah, Isurei Biah 19:1-6. 34. Below, v. 14. 35. Above, v. 4. 36. Above, v. 7.

6 Beyond the obligation of all Jews to be holy,¹⁶ **they must be particularly holy to their God, and must therefore not desecrate their God's Name** by transgressing any of these additional restrictions, **for they offer up the fire-offerings of God**—which are, figuratively speaking, **the “food” of their God**—so, as the servants privileged to be inducted into His service, **they must be particularly holy**. If a priest attempts to ritually defile himself against these rules, the court must prevent him from doing so.¹⁷

7 The priests **must not marry a woman who** has acted like a **prostitute** by fornicating with someone she is not permitted by the Torah to marry¹⁸ **or who is demoted** from the status of being eligible to marry a priest by the circumstances of her birth or by her own history. Additionally, **they must not marry a woman who was divorced from her husband, for the priest is holy to his God**. If a woman from any of these categories has relations with a priest, her offspring by him or by any other priest is demoted from the priesthood.¹⁹ The offspring of a demoted priest is also a demoted priest:²⁰ none of the priestly restrictions on marriage and ritual defilement apply to him.²¹

8 Instruct the people: **‘You, through your representatives, the court, must sanctify the priest in these matters, forcing him to divorce any woman he is not allowed to marry if he refuses to do so on his own,**²² **for, as stated, he offers up the “food” of your God**. In addition, **he must be treated as holy by you**: honor him in all matters of importance (e.g., to speak first at a gathering, to read first from the Torah, and to recite the blessings before and after meals). He must be treated in a holy manner **because I, God, who sanctifies you, am holy**, and it is therefore fitting that the priests, who serve Me in the Tabernacle, should be treated as holy.

9 As you have been taught,²³ the usual punishment for adultery is execution by strangulation. **If, however, a priest's daughter becomes desecrated on account of committing adultery**, not only is she herself desecrated; **she also thereby desecrates the priestly honor of her father**. It denigrates both his character (which she can be assumed to have inherited) and his attentiveness to her upbringing.²⁴ **She therefore requires a more severe form of execution: she must be burned in fire**. Her paramour, however—the male adulterer—is still executed by strangulation.²⁵

Restrictions and Respect for the High Priest

10 In contrast to regular priests, who are allowed to mourn their immediate relatives,²⁶ **the high priest, who has been elevated above his brother priests**—either by means of **the anointment oil having been poured upon his head**²⁷ **or, if the anointment oil was unavailable, who has been installed by being chosen to wear the garments of a high priest**²⁸—**must not leave his hair uncut for 30 consecutive days nor rend his garments**.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

Omer.²⁹ As we will see,³⁰ this commandment allegorically represents our collective education as a people, and the word used for “counting” (ספירה) also means “gleaming” or “shining.” What more

16. Above, 19:2. 17. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, p. 64. 18. See above, on 18:9. 19. *Mishneh Torah, Isurei Biah* 19:3. 20. Ibid. 19:14. 21. Rashi on v. 15, below; *Mishneh Torah, Isurei Biah* 19:10. 22. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, pp. 62, 64. 23. Above, 20:10. 24. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 5, p. 192, note 54. 25. See also Deuteronomy 22:22-27. 26. Above, v. 3. 27. Exodus 29:7. 28. Ibid. 29:29. 29. Below, 23:15-16. 30. Below, on 23:15.

— ONKELOS —

11 ועל כל נפשות מיתא לא ייעול
לאבדוי ולאמה לא יסתאב:
12 ומן מקדשא לא יפוק ולא יחל
ית מקדשא דאלהה ארי כליל
משח רבותא דאלהה עלוהי אגא
13 ויהא אתתא בבתולה יסב:
14 ארמלא ומתרכא וחלילא
מטעיא ית אלן לא יסב אלהין
בתלתא מעמה יסב אתתא:
15 ולא יחל זרעה בעמה ארי אגא
16 ומליל יי עם משה
למימר: 17 מלל עם אהרן למימר
גבר מבניך לזריהון די יהי בה
מומא לא יקרב לקרבא קרבנא
קדם אלהה: 18 ארי כל גבר די בה
מומא לא יקרב גבר עזיר או חגיר
או חרים או שריע:

11 ועל כל-נפשות מת לא יבא לאביו ולאמו לא יטמא:
12 ומן-המקדש לא יצא ולא יחלל את מקדש אלהיו
כי נזר שמן משחת אלהיו עליו אני יהוה: 13 והוא
אשה בבתולה יקח: 14 אלמנה וגרושה וחללה וזה
את-אלה לא יקח כי אם-בתולה מעמי יקח אשה:
15 ולא-יחלל זרעו בעמי כי אני יהוה מקדשו: 16
שני 16 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 17 דבר אל-אהרן
לאמר איש מזרעך לזריתם אשר יהיה בו מום לא יקרב
להקריב לחם אלהיו: 18 כי כל-איש אשר-בו מום לא
יקרב איש עזר או פסח או חרם או שריע:

— RASHI —

שנולדה מפסולי כהנה: 15 ולא יחלל זרעו. הא אם
נשא אחת מן הפסולות — זרעו הימנה חלל מדין
קדשת כהנה: 17 לחם אלהיו. מאכל אלהיו, כל
סעודה קרויה "לחם", כמו: "עבד לחם רב": 18 כי
כל איש אשר בו מום לא יקרב. אינו דין שיקרב, כמו:
"הקריבהו נא לפחותך": חרם. שחטמו שקוע בין שתי
העינים, שכוהל שתי עיניו כאחת: שריע. שאחד
מאבריו גדול מחברו, עינו אחת גדולה ועינו אחת
קטנה, או שזקו אחת ארפה מחברתה:

11 ועל כל נפשות מת וגו'. באהל המת: נפשות מת.
להביא רביעית דם מן המת, שמיטמא באהל: לאביו
ולאמו לא יטמא. לא בא אלא להתיר לו מת מצוה:
12 ומן המקדש לא יצא. אינו הולך אחר המטה. ועוד
מכאן למדו רבותינו שבהן גדול מקריב אונן, וכן
משמעו: אף אם מתו אביו ואמו, אינו צריך לצאת
מן המקדש, אלא עובד עבודה: ולא יחלל את מקדש.
שאינו מחלל בכך את העבודה, שהתיר לו הכתוב,
הא בהן הדיוט שעבד אונן — חלל: 14 וחללה.

6. זבחים צט, א. 7. דניאל ה, א. 8. מלאכי א, ח.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

Thus, the Torah emphasizes the endowments to the high priest be "from his brethren," to teach us that it is specifically those who have dedicated their lives to their own spiritual attainment and/or the religious needs of their fellow Jews who need to acknowledge their debt to their generation's spiritual leaders.

Similarly, we all devote at least part of our lives to our own spiritual growth and the advancement of our fellow Jews. But in addition, we each have our personal "high priest," the holiest, innermost point of our Divine soul, which we must ensure remains preeminent even above our explicitly religious pursuits, in order that our approach to these pursuits not become tainted with ulterior motives. The surest way to ensure that the innermost core of our Divine soul is always actively inspiring and purifying our intentions is by acknowledging the preeminence of our generation's true spiritual leaders.⁴¹

11 In order to bury a corpse he happens upon: The high priest's obligation to defile himself in order to bury an unattended corpse applies even in the unlikely event that such a situation presents itself while he is performing the sacrificial rites of *Yom Kippur* in the Holy of Holies. If there is no one else that can bury this corpse, the high priest must leave the Temple in order to do so; taking care of his fellow Jew's needs supersedes tending to his own spiritual tasks.

Analogously, there are many people who may be considered "unattended, lifeless bodies" spiritually. When, by Divine providence, we encounter such people, it may well be that there is no one else that can attend to their spiritual needs at that particular moment. We must therefore seize the opportunity to help them, reminding ourselves that even the high priest is required to disregard his most sublime responsibilities in order to bury

41. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 10, pp. 295-296; *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 2, pp. 11-12, 277-278.

11 He must not come into any roofed structure in which **any dead bodies** are present—for doing so renders one ritually defiled³⁷—nor defile himself on account of a corpse in any other way. **He must not ritually defile himself** for any close relative, even **his father or his mother**. He may, however, defile himself in order to bury a corpse he happens upon in a deserted area if there is no one else to tend to it.

12 He must not leave the Sanctuary to participate in a funeral. Furthermore, in contradistinction to regular priests,³⁸ the high priest is allowed to offer up sacrifices while in mourning; **he does not** thereby **desecrate the holy things** (i.e., the sacrifices) **of his God**, as an ordinary priest would, **for the crown of his God's anointing oil is upon him**. **I am God**, who may be relied upon to reward him for observing these restrictions.

13 He must marry a woman who is a virgin.

14 This requirement is also subject to a prohibitive commandment: **He must not marry** any of the following types of women: **a widow, a divorcée, a woman who is demoted** from the status of being eligible to marry a priest, **or a woman** who has acted like a **prostitute** by fornicating with someone whom she is not permitted by the Torah to marry.³⁹ However, although **he may only take a virgin as a wife**, she may be from any **of his people**; she need not be from a priestly family.

15 He must not cause his offspring to be demoted from the priesthood by fathering them by any woman from **among his people** who is prohibited to him, **for I am God, who sanctifies him.**”

Disqualification of Priests on Account of Blemishes

◆ *Second Reading* **16 God spoke to Moses, saying,**

17 “Speak to Aaron, saying: ‘Any man among your descendants, throughout their generations, who has a bodily defect (as will be presently described) **may not approach** the Altar **to offer up his God’s “food,”** so to speak,

18 for it is not proper that any man who has such a defect should approach the Altar. It is fitting that the priests, who serve Me in the Tabernacle, should externally reflect the inner completeness that is the goal of the Tabernacle service.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

[made] great [in wealth] *from* [the wealth of] his brothers,” it implies that if the high priest is not the wealthiest priest when he is appointed, his fellow priests must contribute of their wealth to him until his surpasses any of theirs.

Were a simple Jew to be asked to contribute toward the high priest’s endowment, he would most likely do so eagerly. He would immediately recall how much he owes the high priest—his chief representative in the Divine service of the Temple, and specifically, the one who obtains atonement for the whole Jewish people on *Yom Kippur*—and how the Torah invests the high priest with so much holi-

ness that it requires him spend almost all his time in the Holy Temple,⁴⁰ forbidding him to leave even to mourn for close relatives. He would therefore consider it an honor to contribute to his support, thereby having at least a small share in the high priest’s holiness.

Were the same proposition to be brought to a regular priest, however, the response might be less keen. Considering himself also holy, he might not deem it such a privilege to contribute to the fund. If asked to solicit funds from other priests, he might begrudge the time it would take him to do so, arguing that this would force him to neglect his sacred duties.

37. Numbers 19:14. 38. Above, v. 3. 39. See above, v. 7. 40. *Mishneh Torah, Kelei HaMikdash* 5:7.

ONKELOS

19 או גבר די יהי בה תבר רגלא
או תבר ידא: 20 או גבין או דקא
או חליז בעינה או גרבין או חזון
או מריס פחדין: 21 כל גבר די
בה מומא מורעא דאהרן כהנא
לא יקרב לקרבא ית קרבנא דיי
מומא בה ית קרבן אלהה לא
יקרב לקרבא: 22 קרבן אלהה
מקדש קדשא ומן קדשא ייבול:
23 ברם לפרכתא לא ייעול
ולמדבחה לא יקרב ארי מומא
בה ולא יחל ית מקדשי ארי אגא
יי מקדשו: 24 ומליל משה
עם אהרן ועם בנוהי ועם כל בני
ישראל: 25 ומליל יי עם משה
למיומר: 2 מלל עם אהרן ועם
בנוהי ויפרשון מקדשיא דבני
ישראל ולא יחלו ית שמה דקדשי
די אגון מקדשין קדמי אגא יי:

19 או איש אשר יהיה בו שבר רגל או שבר יד: 20 או
גבין אודק או תבלל בעינו או גרב או ילפת או מרוח
אשד: 21 כל איש אשר בו מום מורע אהרן הכהן לא
יגש להקריב את-איש יהוה מום בו את לחם אלהיו
לא יגש להקריב: 22 לחם אלהיו מקדשי הקדשים
ומן-הקדשים יאכל: 23 אך אלה-הפרכת לא יזא ואל-
המוזבח לא יגש ביי-מום בו ולא יחלל את-מקדשי כי
אני יהוה מקדשם: 24 וידבר משה אל-אהרן ואל-בניו
ואל-כל-בני ישראל: פ

22:1 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 2 דבר אל-אהרן
ואל-בניו ויגזרו מקדשי בני-ישראל ולא יחללו את-שם
קדשי אשר הם מקדשים לי אני יהוה:

RASHI

שאר מומין: מום בו. בעוד מומו בו — פסול, הא
אם עבר מומו — פשר: לחם אלהיו. כל מאכל קרוי
"לחם": 22 מקדשי הקדשים. אלו קדשי הקדשים: ומן
הקדשים יאכל. אלו קדשים קלים. ואם נאמרו קדשי
הקדשים, למה נאמרו קדשים קלים? אם לא נאמר,
הייתי אומר: בקדשי הקדשים יאכל בעל מום,
שמצינו שהתירו לזר, שאכל משה בשר המלואים,
אכל בחזה ושוק של קדשים קלים לא יאכל, שלא
מצינו זר חולק בהן, לכך נאמרו קדשים קלים. כך
מפרש בזבחים: 23 אך אל הפרכת. להזות שבע
הזאות שעל הפרכת: ואל המזבח. החיצון. ושניהם
הצרכו להכתב, ומפרש בתורת כהנים: ולא יחלל
את מקדשי. שאם עבד, עבודתו מחללת להפסול:
24 וידבר משה. המצוה הזאת: אל אהרן ואל בניו ואל
כל בני ישראל. להזהיר בית דין על הכהנים: 2 ויגזרו.
אין "ויגזרו" אלא פרישה, וכן הוא אומר: "ויגזרו
מאחרי", "גזרו אחור" — יפרשו מן הקדשים בימי
טמאתן. "ויגזרו מקדשי בני ישראל אשר הם מקדשים
לי ולא יחללו את שם קדשי", סרס המקרא ודרשהו:
אשר הם מקדשים לי. לרבות קדשי כהנים עצמן:

20 או גבין. שורציל"ש בלעז, שגביני עיניו שערן
ארץ ושוב: או דק. שיש לו בעיניו דק שקורין
טייל"א, כמו: "הנוטה כדק": או תבלל. דבר
המבלבל את העין, כגון חוט לבן הנמשך מן הלבן
ופוסק בסירא, שהוא עגל המקיף את השחור
שקוראים פרוניל"א⁹, והחוט הזה פוסק את העגל
ונכנס בשחור. ותרגום "תבלול" — "חליז", לשון
חלזון, שהוא דומה לתולעת אותו החוט, וכן בנוהו
חכמי ישראל במומי הבכור: "חלזון, נחש, ענב":
גרב וילפת. מיני שחין הם: "גרב" — זו החרס,
שחין היבש מבפנים ומבחוץ. "ילפת" — היא חנונית
המצרית. ולמה נקראת "ילפת"? שמלפפת והולכת
עד יום המיתה, והוא לח מבחוץ ויבש מבפנים.
ובמקום אחר קורא לגרב "שחין", הלח מבחוץ ויבש
מבפנים, שנאמר: "ובגרב ובחרס" — כשסמוך גרב
אצל חרס, קורא לילפת "גרב", וכשהוא סמוך אצל
ילפת, קורא לחרס "גרב". כך מפרש בבכורות:
מרוח אשד. לפי התרגום: "מריס פחדין", שפחדיו
מקדסין — שביצים שלו כותוין. "פחדין" — כמו:
"גידיו פחדיו ושרגיו": 21 כל איש אשר בו מום. לרבות

9. בעל גבות ארכות וסבוכות. 10. קרום. 11. ישעיה מ, כב. 12. אישון. 13. בכורות לח, א. 14. דברים כח, כז. 15. מא, א. 16. איוב מ, יז. 17. קא, ב. 18. יחזקאל
יז, א. 19. ישעיה א, ד.

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

an unattended corpse, but we have been granted person but reviving him.⁴⁷
the privilege of not merely attending to a "dead"

47. Hitva'aduyot 5744, vol. 3, pp. 1844-1845; Hitva'aduyot 5745, vol. 2, p. 1201.

Specifically, the following individuals are disqualified on this basis: **a blind man, a lame man, a man whose nose is sunken** between his eyes such that he could pass a brush over both eyes with one stroke, **a man with mismatched limbs** (e.g., one eye being larger than the other or one leg being longer than the other),

19 a man who has a broken leg or arm,

20 a man whose eyebrows are so **long** that they extend over his eyes, **a man with a cataract, a man with a commingling** of the normally separate colors **in his eye** (e.g., an extension of the white of the eye into the iris), **a man with dry boils, a man with oozing boils, or a man with crushed testicles.**

21 Any man among the descendants of Aaron the priest who has a bodily defect—whether one of those just listed or any other—**must not approach** the Altar **to offer up God's fire-offerings.** As long as **he has such a defect, he must not approach** the Altar **to offer up his God's "food."** If the defect disappears, however, he may officiate as a priest.

22 Even though a blemished priest may not offer up sacrifices, **he may** nonetheless **eat** the priests' portions of **his God's "food"**—both **from the** sacrifices of **superior holiness** (sin-offerings and guilt-offerings) **and from the** sacrifices of lesser **holiness** (peace-offerings and the like).

23 But he may not officiate as a priest. **He must not even** enter the Sanctuary and **approach the Curtain** in front of the Holy of Holies in order to sprinkle sacrificial blood upon it⁴² or upon the Inner Altar,⁴³ **besides not approaching the Outer Altar** to offer up sacrifices, as already stated, **for he has a bodily defect. He must not desecrate My holy things** (i.e., sacrifices) by offering them up; if he does so, the sacrifice is invalid, **for I am God, who sanctifies the priests.'**"

24 God told Moses to instruct only the priests to train their children in the observance of these laws,⁴⁴ rather than to instruct the court to shoulder this responsibility as well, because He knew that the priests would hereditarily be sufficiently assiduous to train their children properly. Thus, it would only be necessary to enjoin the court to enforce these restrictions when necessary.⁴⁵ **Moses**, however, could not know about the priests' hereditary assiduousness, so he therefore **told** not only **Aaron and his sons** to train their children in the observance of these laws, but also **all of the Israelites**, enjoining their representatives, the court, to ensure that all priests were conversant in these restrictions and heedful of them.⁴⁶

Eligibility to Consume Consecrated Food

22:1 God spoke to Moses, saying:

2 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, and tell them that when they are ritually defiled, they must abstain from eating of the holy sacrifices of the Israelites and of the sacrifices that they themselves sanctify to Me, so as not to desecrate My Holy Name. I am God, who may be relied upon to reward them for following My decrees.

42. Above, 4:6, 17, 16:16. 43. Mizrahi. 44. Above, vv. 1, 17. 45. Above, vv. 6, 8. 46. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, pp. 61-65.

ONKELOS

3 אמר להן לזרובן כל גבר
די יקרב מכל זרעבון לקדשאי
די יקדשון בני ישראל קדם יי
וסאובתה עלוהי וישתיצי אנשא
ההוא מן קדמי אנא יי: 4 גבר
גבר מזרעא דאהרן והוא סגיר
או דאיב בקדשאי לא ייכול עד
די ידכי ודיקרב בכל טמא נפשא
או גבר די תפוק מנה שכבת זרעא:
5 או גבר די יקרב בכל רחשא די
יסתאב לה או באנשא די יסתאב
לה לכל סאובתה: 6 אנש די יקרב
בה ויהי מסאב עד רמשא ולא
ייכול מן קדשאי אלהין אסחי
בשרה במאי: 7 ובמעל שמשא
וידכי ובתר כן ייכול מן קדשאי
ארי לחמה הוא: 8 גבילא ותבירא
לא ייכול לאסתאבא בה אנא יי:

3 אָמַר אֲלֵהֶם לְזִרְתִּיכֶם כָּל־אִישׁ | אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרַב מִכָּל־
זֶרַעְכֶּם אֶל־הַקִּדְשִׁים אֲשֶׁר יִקְדִּישׁוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לַיהוָה
וּטְמֵאתוּ עָלָיו וּנְכַרְתָּה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִלִּפְנֵי אֲנִי יְהוָה:
4 אִישׁ אִישׁ מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן וְהוּא צְרוּעַ אוֹ זָב בַּקִּדְשִׁים לֹא
יֹאכֵל עַד אֲשֶׁר יִטְהַר וְהִנָּיַע בְּכָל־טְמֵא־נֶפֶשׁ אוֹ אִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר־תֵּצֵא מִמֶּנּוּ שִׁכְבַּת־זֶרַע: 5 אוֹ־אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִנָּע
בְּכָל־שֶׁרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִטְמָא־לוֹ אוֹ בָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יִטְמָא־לוֹ
לְכָל טְמֵאתוֹ: 6 נֶפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּנְעֲבֹ וּטְמֵאָה עַד־הָעֶרֶב
וְלֹא יֹאכֵל מִן־הַקִּדְשִׁים כִּי אִם־רָחֵץ בְּשָׁרוֹ בַּמַּיִם: 7 וְכֹא
הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְטָהָר וְאַחֵר יֹאכֵל מִן־הַקִּדְשִׁים כִּי לַחְמוֹ הוּא:
8 גְבִילָה וּמִרְפָּה לֹא יֹאכֵל לְטְמֵאָה־בָּהּ אֲנִי יְהוָה:

RASHI

ה" — בְּכָל מְקוֹם אָנִי. 4 מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן. אֵין לִי אֱלָא
זֶרַעוֹ, גּוֹפּוֹ מִנֶּזֶק תִּלְמוּד לומֵר: "וְהוּא צְרוּעַ", שְׂיִכּוֹל
הוֹאִיל וּמִקְרִיב אוֹנֵן, יִקְרִיב צְרוּעַ וְזָב תִּלְמוּד לומֵר:
"וְהוּא": עַד אֲשֶׁר יִטְהַר. בֵּיאת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ. אוֹ אֵינוֹ אֱלָא
טְבִילָה? נֶאֱמַר כָּאֵן "וְטָהָר", וְנֶאֱמַר לְמַטְהָר "וְטָהָר":
"יֹאכֵל הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְטָהָר", מִה לְהֵלֶן בֵּיאת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, אִף
כָּאֵן בֵּיאת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ: בְּכָל טְמֵא נֶפֶשׁ. בְּמֵי שְׁנִטְמָא בְּמַת:
5 בְּכָל שֶׁרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יִטְמָא לוֹ. בְּשַׁעוֹר הָרְאוּי לְטְמָא,
בְּכַעֲדָשָׁה: אוֹ בָאָדָם. בְּמַת: אֲשֶׁר יִטְמָא לוֹ. בְּשַׁעוֹרוֹ
לְטְמָא, וְהוּא כְּזֵית: לְכָל טְמֵאתוֹ. לְרִבּוֹת נוֹגַע בְּזָב
וְזָבָה, נִדָּה וְיוֹלָדָת: 6 נֶפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּנְעֲבֹ. בְּאֶחָד מִן
הַטְּמָאִים הַלָּלוּ: 7 וְאַחֵר יֹאכֵל מִן הַקִּדְשִׁים. נִדְרָשׁ
בִּיבְמוֹת²⁰ בְּתִרְמוֹה, שְׂמֵתָר לְאֶכְלָה בְּהָעֶרֶב הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ:
מִן הַקִּדְשִׁים. וְלֹא כָל הַקִּדְשִׁים: 8 גְבִילָה וּמִרְפָּה לֹא
יֹאכֵל לְטְמָאָה בָּהּ. לְעֵנֶן הַטְּמָאָה הַזֶּהִיר כָּאֵן, שְׂאֵם
אֶכֶל גְּבִילָת עוֹף טְהוֹר, שְׂאֵין לָהּ טְמָאת מַגֵּעַ וּמִשְׂא,
אֱלָא טְמָאת אֶכְלָה בְּבֵית הַבְּלִיעָה, אֲסוּר לְאֶכֶל
בַּקִּדְשִׁים. וְצִרִיף לומֵר: "וּמִרְפָּה" — מִי שֵׁישׁ בְּמִינוֹ
טְרָפָה, יֵצֵא גְבִילָת עוֹף טְמָא, שְׂאֵין בְּמִינוֹ טְרָפָה:

3 כָּל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִקְרַב. אֵין "קְרִיבָה" זוֹ אֱלָא אֶכְלָה.
וְכֵן מְצִינוֹ שְׂנֵאֲמָרָה אֲזִהְרַת אֶכִּילַת קִדְשִׁים בְּטְמָאָה
בְּלִשׁוֹן "נִגְיָעָה": "בְּכָל קֶדֶשׁ לֹא תִנְעֲבֹ"²¹ — אֲזִהְרָה
לְאוֹכֵל, וּלְמִדּוּהָ רְבוּתִינוּי²² מְגֻזָּרָה שָׁוָה. וְאִי אֶפְשָׁר
לומֵר שְׂחִיב עַל הַנִּגְיָעָה, שְׂחִירִי נֶאֱמַר כְּרַת עַל
הָאֶכְלָה בִּ"צוֹ אֶת אַהֲרֹן"²³, שְׁתֵּי כְרִיתוֹת זוֹ אֶצֶל
זוֹ, וְאֵם עַל הַנִּגְיָעָה חִיב, לֹא הִצְרִךְ לְחִיבּוֹ עַל
הָאֶכְלָה. וְכֵן נִדְרָשׁ בְּתוֹרַת כְּהֻנִּים: וְכִי יֵשׁ נוֹגֵעַ
חִיבֵי אֵם כֵּן, מִה תִּלְמוּד לומֵר "יִקְרַב"? מִשְׂחִיבֵשׁ
לְקַרְבִּי, שְׂאֵין חִיבֵין עָלָיו מִשּׁוּם טְמָאָה אֱלָא אִם כֵּן
קָרְבוֹ מִתִּירָיו. וְאֵם תֹּאמַר: שְׁלֹשׁ כְּרִיתוֹת בְּטְמָאת
כְּהֻנִּים לְמַה? כְּבֵר נִדְרָשׁוֹ בְּמַסְכַּת שְׁבוּעוֹת²⁴: אַחַת
לְכָלֵל וְאַחַת לְפָרֵט וְכוּ': וּטְמָאתוֹ עָלָיו. וּטְמָאת הָאָדָם
עָלָיו. וְכֹל בְּבֶשֶׁר הַכְּתוּב מִדְּבַר, "וּטְמָאתוֹ" שֶׁל בֶּשֶׁר
עָלָיו, וּבְטָהוֹר שְׂאֶכֶל אֶת הַטְּמָא הַכְּתוּב מִדְּבַר עַל
כְּרִיף מִמִּשְׁמַעוֹ אֶתָּה לְמַד, בְּמֵי שְׂטְמָאתוֹ פּוֹרְחַת
מִמֶּנּוּ הַכְּתוּב מִדְּבַר, וְהוּא הָאָדָם שֵׁישׁ לוֹ טָהָרָה
בְּטְבִילָה: וּנְכַרְתָּהּ וּגו'. יִכּוֹל מַצַּד זֶה לְצַד זֶה, יְכַרַת
מִמֶּקוֹמוֹ וְיִתְיַשֵּׁב בְּמִקוֹם אַחֵר? תִּלְמוּד לומֵר: "אֲנִי

20. ויקרא יב, ד. 21. יבמות עה, א. 22. ויקרא ז כבא. 23. ז, א. 24. פסוק ז. 25. עד, ב.

(for only permitted fowl can become forbidden solely on this account)—thereby becoming ritually defiled through eating it, even if he did not touch or carry it.⁶⁴ I am God, who may be relied upon to punish him for eating *terumah* when he is ritually defiled.

64. Above, 17:15.

3 Say to them: ‘Throughout your generations, any man among any of your descendants who, while in a state of ritual defilement, approaches—i.e., eats of—the holy sacrifices that the Israelites consecrate to God, that person will be cut off from before Me—i.e., he will die prematurely and childless.⁴⁸ This prohibition applies only once the priests’ portions of the sacrifices have become permitted to be eaten—i.e., in the case of animal sacrifices, after their blood has been applied to the Altar,⁴⁹ and in the case of grain-offerings, once their memorial portion has been burned up on the Altar.⁵⁰ I am God, who may be relied upon to punish him for transgressing this prohibition.

4 A ritually defiled priest must also abstain from eating *terumah*:⁵¹ Any man among Aaron’s descendants who is afflicted with *tzara’at*⁵² or has had a non-seminal discharge of the type described previously⁵³ must not eat of the holy food—*terumah*—until he purifies himself of ritual defilement, as will be described presently. The same is true for one who touches anyone who has become ritually defiled by contact with a dead person; a man who has had a seminal emission;⁵⁴

5 a man who touches the carcass of any of the eight types of crawling creature that impart ritual defilement—provided that if he touches only a piece of the carcass, that piece is large enough that he can be ritually defiled by touching it (i.e., the volume of a lentil bean);⁵⁵ a man who touches the corpse a person—provided that if he touches only a piece of the corpse, that piece is large enough that he can be ritually defiled by touching it (i.e., the volume of an olive [57 ml or 2 oz]);⁵⁶ or a man who touches any other person who can transmit ritual defilement, by which he becomes ritually defiled, such as a man who has had a non-seminal discharge,⁵⁷ a woman who has had a menstrual⁵⁸ or non-menstrual⁵⁹ discharge, or a woman who has given birth.⁶⁰

6 A person who touches any of the above-mentioned entities will remain ritually defiled until evening, as follows: He must not eat from the holy food—*terumah*—unless he has immersed his flesh in the water of a *mikveh*,

7 and even after he immerses himself, it is only when the sun sets that he becomes sufficiently undefiled to be permitted to eat *terumah*. After this he may eat of this type of holy food—*terumah*—for it is his staple food. In contrast, if he was afflicted with *tzara’at*⁶¹ or had a non-seminal discharge,⁶² he may not eat the other type of holy food—sacrificial meat—until he has brought the required sacrifices the following day, as you have been taught; and if he became ritually defiled on account of contact with a corpse, he may not eat sacrificial meat until he has been purified with the ashes of the red cow, as you will be taught later.⁶³

8 Besides taking care not to become ritually defiled through any of the above means if he wants to eat *terumah*, he must also not eat beforehand from the carcass of a species of fowl that can become forbidden for consumption on account of being found to be suffering from a fatal defect—i.e., a species that is permitted for food

48. Rashi on 17:9, 20:20, above, and 23:30, below. 49. Above, 6:19. 50. Above, 2:3. 51. Exodus 22:28; Numbers 18:12; Deuteronomy 18:4. 52. Above, 13:1-46. 53. Above, 15:1-15, 31-33. 54. Above 15:16-18. 55. Above, 11:29-31. 56. Numbers 19:11-16. 57. Above, 15:1-15, 31-33. 58. Above, 15:19-24. 59. Above, 15:25-30. 60. Above, 12:1-8. 61. Above, 14:1-32. 62. Above, 15:13-15. 63. Numbers 19.

ONKELOS

9 וישמרו את משמרתו ולא ישאו עליו חטא ומתו בו
 כי יחללוהו אני יהוה מקדשם: 10 וכל־זר לא־יאכל
 קדש תושב כהן ושכיר לא־יאכל קדש: 11 וכהן כִּי־
 יקנה נפש קנינו בספו הוא יאכל בו ויליד ביתו הם
 יאכלו בלחמו: 12 ובת־כהן כִּי תהיה לאיש זר הוא
 בתרומת הקדשים לא תאכל: 13 ובת־כהן כִּי תהיה
 אלמנה וגרושה וזרע אין לה ושבה אל־בית אביה
 בנעוריה מלחם אביה תאכל וכל־זר לא־יאכל בו:
 14 ואיש כִּי־יאכל קדש בשגגה ויסף חמטיתו עליו
 ונתן לכהן את־הקדש: 15 ולא יחללו את־קדשי בני
 ישראל את אשר־ירימו ליהוה: 16 והשיאו אותם עון
 אשמה באכלם את־קדשיהם כִּי אני יהוה מקדשם: פ
 שלישי 17 וידבר יהוה אל־משה לאמר: 18 דבר אל־
 אהרן ואֶל־בָּנָיו ואֶל כָּל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל ואמרת אֲלֵהֶם איש
 איש מבית ישראל ומן־הגֵּר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יקריב קרבנו
 לְכָל־נְדָרֵיהֶם וּלְכָל־נְדֻבוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר־יקריבו ליהוה לַעֲלֹה:

RASHI

9 וישמרו את משמרתו. מלאכל תרומה בטמאת
 הגוף: ומתו בו. למדנו שהיא מיתה בידי שמים:
 10 לא יאכל קדש. בתרומה הכתוב מדבר, שכל
 הענין דבר בה: תושב כהן ושכיר. תושבו של כהן
 ושכירו. לפיכך "תושב" זה נקוד פתח, לפי שהוא
 דבוק. ואיזהו "תושב"? זה נרצע, שהוא קנוי לו עד
 היובל. ואיזהו "שכיר"? זה קנוי קנין שנים, שיוצא
 בשש. בא הכתוב ולמדך כאן, שאין גופו קנוי
 לאדונו לאכל בתרומתו: 11 וכהן כִּי יקנה נפש. עבד
 כנעני, שקנוי לגופו: ויליד ביתו. אלו בני השפחות.
 ואשת כהן אוכלת בתרומה מן המקרא הזה, שאף
 היא קנין כספו, ועוד למד ממקרא אחר: "כל טהור
 בביתך" וגו', בספרי: 12 לאיש זר. ללוי וישראל:
 13 אלמנה וגרושה. מן האיש הזר: וזרע אין לה. ממנו:
 ושה. הא אם יש לה זרע ממנו, אסורה בתרומה כל

זמן שהזרע קים: וכל זר לא יאכל בו. לא בא אלא
 להוציא את האונן, שמתר בתרומה, "זרות" אמרת
 לה ולא אנינות: 14 כִּי יאכל קדש. תרומה: ונתן לכהן
 את הקדש. דבר הראוי להיות קדש, שאינו פורע
 לו מעות אלא פרות של חלין, והן נעשין תרומה:
 15 ולא יחללו וגו'. להאכילם לזרים: 16 והשיאו
 אותם. את עצמם יטענו עון "באכלם את קדשיהם",
 שהבדילו לשם תרומה וקדשו ונאסרו עליהן.
 ואנקלוס שתרגם: "במיכלהון בסואבא", שלא לצרף
 תרגמו כן: והשיאו אותם. זה אחד משלשה "אתים"
 שהיה רבי ישמעאל דורש בתורה שמדברים באדם
 עצמו. וכן: "ביום מלאת ימי נורו יביא אתו", הוא
 יביא את עצמו. וכן: "ויקבר אתו בגי", הוא קבר
 את עצמו. כך נדרש בספרי: 18 נדריהם. הרי עלי:
 נדבותם. הרי זו:

26. במדבר יח, יא. 27. במדבר ו, יג. 28. דברים לד, ו.

9 The priests **must safeguard My charge** not to eat *terumah* while ritually defiled; only thus **will they not bear** responsibility for a **sin punishable by death** by the heavenly court **on account of having desecrated it. I am God, who sanctifies them** by requiring them to eat their *terumah* only when not ritually defiled.

10 **No non-priest may eat holy** food, i.e., *terumah*. A **priest's** lay or Levite Hebrew bondman—whether he has been indentured to the priest until the Jubilee year by having his earlobe pierced⁶⁵ and may therefore be considered a **resident** of the priest's household, **or** he has not had his earlobe pierced, in which case he will serve his master for a maximum of six years⁶⁶ and is thus considered his **hired servant**—**may not eat holy** food, i.e., *terumah*.

11 In contrast, **if a priest acquires a non-Jewish person as a monetary acquisition**, i.e., as his bondman, this bondman **may eat** the priest's *terumah*. As to **those non-Jewish children born in his house** to a Hebrew bondman and a non-Jewish bondwoman,⁶⁷ **they may eat of his holy food**, i.e., his *terumah*.

12 The priest's wife and children may also eat his *terumah*. However, **if a priest's daughter marries a layman** (even a Levite), **she may** no longer eat her father's **holy *terumah***.

13 **But if the priest's daughter becomes widowed or divorced** from her lay husband, **and she has no living descendants** through him, **she may return to her father's household as in her youth and eat of her father's *terumah*-food. No non-priest may eat of it**, but a priest may eat of it even when in mourning.

14 **If a lay person unintentionally eats holy** food, i.e., *terumah*, **he must** take that same amount of non-holy food, **add a fifth of** that same kind of food **to it, and give** it all to **the priest** to whom it belonged, at which point the paid-back food plus the additional fifth become **the priest's restored holy** food, i.e., his *terumah*, subject to all the restrictions pertaining to *terumah*.

15 The priests **must not desecrate the holy *terumah***, which the lay Israelites have **set aside** from the produce of their fields **for God**, by allowing lay people to eat it,⁶⁸

16 **thereby causing themselves to bear iniquity and guilt when the laity eat their holy *terumah*, for I am God, who sanctifies them** by providing them with food that is forbidden to non-priests.'"

Disqualification of Sacrifices on Account of Blemishes

◆ *Third Reading* 17 God spoke to Moses, saying,

18 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them: 'As you have been taught⁶⁹ with regard to any person from the house of Israel or from the converts among Israel who offers up his sacrifice for any of his sacrificial vows or for any of his sacrificial dedications⁷⁰ that he may offer up to God as an ascent-offering,

65. Exodus 21:6; below, 25:40; Deuteronomy 15:16-17. 66. Exodus 21:2; below, 25:40; Deuteronomy 15:12. 67. Exodus 21:3-4. 68. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 38, pp. 68-70. 69. Above, 1:3, 10. 70. See on 7:16, above.

ONKELOS

19 לרענא לכון שלים דכורא בתורי באמריא ובעזא: 20 כל די בה מומא לא תקרבון ארי לא רענא יחי לכון: 21 וגבר ארי קרב נכסת קדשא קדם יי לפרשא נדרא או לנדבתא בתורי או בענא שלים יחי לרענא כל מומא לא יחי בה: 22 עור או תביר או פסיק או יכלן או גרבן או חזון לא תקרבון אליו קדם יי וקרנא לא תתנו מנהון על מדבתא קדם יי: 23 ותור ואמר יתיר וחסיר נדבתא תעבד יתה ולנדרא לא יחי לרענא: 24 ודימריס ודירסיס ודישליף ודיגור לא תקרבון קדם יי ובארעכון לא תעבדון: 25 ומיד בר עממין לא תקרבון ית קרבן אלהכון מקל אליו ארי חבולחון בהון מומא בהון לא לרענא יחון לכון:

19 לרענאכם תמים זכר בבקר בפשבים ובעזים: 20 כל אשר בו מום לא תקריבו כילא לרעון יהיה לכם: 21 ואיש כייקריב ובהשלמים ליהוה לפלא נדר או לנדבה בבקר או בצאן תמים יהיה לרעון כל מום לא יהיה בו: 22 עורת או שבור או חרוץ או יבלת או גרב או ילפת לא תקריבו אלה ליהוה ואשה לא תתנו מהם עליהמוזבח ליהוה: 23 ושור ושה שרוע וקלוט נדבה תעשה אותו ולנדר לא ירצה: 24 ומעוד וכתות ונתוק וכוות לא תקריבו ליהוה ובארעכם לא תעשו: 25 ומיד בנכר לא תקריבו את לחם אלהיכם מכל אלה כי משחתם בהם מום כם לא ירעו לכם: ס

RASHI

תלושין ביד עד שנפסקו חוטים שתלויים בהן, אכל נתונים הם בתוך הכיס, והכיס לא נתלש: וכוות. תרגומו: "ודמריס", זה לשונו בארמית לשון כתישה: וכתות. תרגומו: "ודרסיס", כמו: "הבית הגדול רסיסים", בקיעות דקות, וכן: קנה המרסס: ובארעכם לא תעשו. דבר זה לרס שום בהמה וחיה, ואפלו טמאה, לכה נאמר: "בארעכם" — לרבות כל אשר בארעכם, שאי אפשר לומר: לא נצטוו על החרוס אלא בארץ, שהרי טרוס חובת הגוף הוא, וכל חובת הגוף נזהגת בין בארץ בין בחוצה לארץ: 25 ומיד בן נכר. נכרי שהביא קרבן ביד בהן להקריבו לשמים, לא תקריבו לו בעל מום. ואף על פי שלא נאסרו בעלי מומים לקרבן בני נח, אלא אם כן מחסרי אבר, זאת נזהגת בבמה שבשדות, אבל על המזבח שבמשכן לא תקריבוה, אבל תמימה תקבלו מהם, לכה נאמר למעלה: "איש איש", לרבות את הנכרים, שנודרים נדרים ונדבות כישוראל: משחתם. "חבולחון": לא ירעו לכם. לכפר עליכם:

19 לרענאכם. הביאו דבר הראוי לרצות אתכם לפני, שיהא לכם לרעון, אפיימינ"ט בלעזי. ואיזהו הראוי לרעון? "תמים זכר בבקר בפשבים ובעזים". אבל בעולת העוף אין צריך תמות וזכרות, ואינו נפסל במום, אלא בחסרון אבר: 21 לפלא נדר. להפריש בדבור: 22 עורת. שם דבר של מום ענרן בלשון נקבה, שלא יהא בו מום של "עורת": או שבור. לא יהיה: חרוץ. ריס של עין שנסדק או שנפגם, וכן שפתו שנסדקה או נפגמה: יבלת. וירוא"ה בלעזי: גרב. מין חזזית, וכן "ילפת". ולשון "ילפת", כמו: "ילפת שמשון", שאחונה בו עד יום מיתה, שאין לה רפואה: לא תקריבו. שלש פעמים, להזהיר על הקדשתו, ועל שחיתתו, ועל זריקת דמן: ואשה לא תתנו. אזהרת הקטרת: 23 שרוע. אבר גדול מחברו: וקלוט. פרסותיו קלוטות: נדבה תעשה אותו. לבדק הבית: ולנדר. למזבח: לא ירצה. איזהו הקדש בא לרצות, הוי אומר: זה הקדש המזבח: 24 ומעוד וכתות ונתוק וכוות. בביצים או בגיד: מעוד. ביציו מעוכין ביד: כתות. כתושים יותר מ"מעוד": נתוק.

29. פיוס. 30. יבלת. 31. שופטים טז, כט. 32. עמוס ו, יא. 33. שבת פ, ב. 34. פסוק יח.

19 he must offer up an animal **that will attain God's favor for you**: the animal must be **an unblemished male** if it is **from cattle, sheep, or goats**. If it is a fowl, however, it need not be male or unblemished, just not lacking a limb.⁷¹

20 **You must not offer up any animal that has a blemish, for such an animal will not attain God's favor for you.**

21 You have also been taught⁷² that **if a man offers up a peace-offering to God after articulating a sacrificial vow or as the fulfillment of a sacrificial dedication, whether from cattle or from the flock, then in order to attain God's favor, it must be unblemished** when he consecrates it; **it must not have any blemish**. And once the animal has been consecrated, it is forbidden to purposely blemish it, thereby disqualifying it from being offered up.⁷³

22 However, you have not yet been taught what bodily defects are considered blemishes for these purposes. These are as follows:

Regarding an animal that is **blind**, has a **broken** bone, a **split** eyelid or lip, **warts, dry boils, or oozing boils**:⁷⁴ **you must not offer up any of these to God, nor must you place any of these upon the Altar as a fire-offering to God.**

23 **As for an ox or sheep that has mismatched limbs** (e.g., one eye being larger than the other or one leg being longer than the other) **or uncloven hooves** (i.e., abnormally, since oxen and sheep normally have cloven hooves), **you may make it into the fulfillment of a sacrificial dedication** by donating it to the Tabernacle so it can be sold and the proceeds of its sale be used for the Tabernacle's upkeep or repair, **but it will not be accepted in fulfillment of a sacrificial vow.**

24 **You must not offer up to God** any animal whose testicles or reproductive organ were **squashed** by hand, **crushed** totally by hand, **disconnected** from the seminal ducts by hand, **or severed** from the seminal ducts with an instrument, even though the scrotum is still intact. Moreover, **you must not do** anything that would maim any animal **in your land** (or outside of it) in these ways, i.e., castrate it.

25 Non-Jews may offer up blemished animals to God on altars they erect themselves, as long as these animals are not missing any limbs. However, if a non-Jew wishes to offer up a sacrifice as a vow or dedication, **you must not offer up any blemished animals of these types as "food" for your God from a gentile, for such animals are defective** in that **they are blemished**, and therefore they will not be effective for the gentile, just as **they would not attain God's favor for you** if you offered them up. You may, however, accept unblemished animals from them, as vows or dedications, to offer up on their behalf in the Tabernacle.

The prohibition against offering up blemished animals includes designating such animals as sacrifices, slaughtering them as sacrifices, and sprinkling their blood on the Altar."⁷⁵

71. Above, 1:14. 72. Above, 3:1, 6. 73. Rashi on Deuteronomy 14:3; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, p. 88, note 2. *Mishneh Torah*, *Isurei Mizbeich* 1:7. 74. Rashi on 21:20, above. 75. Rashi on v. 22, above.

— ONKELOS —

26 ומליל יי עם משה למימרי:
27 תור או אמר או עזא ארי
יתיליד ויהי שבועא יומין בתר
אמה ומיומא תמינאה ולהלא
יתרעי לקרבא קרבנא קדם יי:
28 ותורתא או שיתא לה ולברה
לא תכסון ביומא חד: 29 וארי
תכסון נכסת תודתא קדם יי:
לרענא לכוון תכסנה: 30 ביומא
ההוא יתאכל לא תשארון מנה
עד צפרא אנא יי: 31 ותשרון
פקודי ותעבדון יתהון אנא יי:

26 וידבר יהוה אל־משה לאמר: 27 שור או־כֶּשֶׁב או־
על פי יולד והיה שבועת ימים תחת אמו ומיום השמיני
והלאה ירצה לקרבן אשה ליהוה: 28 ושור או־שה אתו
ואת־בנו לא תשחטו ביום אחד: 29 וכִּי־תזבחו זבח־
תודה ליהוה לרצונכם תזבחו: 30 ביום ההוא יאכל לא־
תותירו ממנו עד־בקר אני יהוה: 31 ושִׁמְרֶתֶם מצותי
ועשיתם אתם אני יהוה:

— RASHI —

לדעתכם, מכאן למתעסק שפסול בשחיטת קדשים.
ואף על פי שפרט בנאכלים לשני ימים, חור ופרט
בנאכלין ליום אחד, שתהא זביחתן על מנת לאכלן
בזמן: 30 ביום ההוא יאכל. לא בא להזהיר אלא
שתהא שחיטה על מנת כן, שאם לקבע לה זמן
אכילה, כבר פתוב⁸⁰: "ובשר זבח תורת שלמיו"
וגו' אני ה'. דע מי גזר על הדבר, ואל יקל בעיניו:
31 ושִׁמְרֶתֶם. זו המשנה: ועשיתם. זה המעשה:

27 כי יולד. פרט ליוצא דפן: 28 אתו ואת בנו. נוהג
בנקבה, שאסור לשחט האם והבן או הבת. ואינו
נוהג בזכרים, ומתר לשחט האב והבן או האב והבת:
אתו ואת בנו. אף בנו ואותו במשמע: 29 לרצונכם
תזבחו. תחלת זביחתכם הוזהרו שתהא לרצון לכם,
ומהו הרצון, "ביום ההוא יאכל", לא בא להזהיר
אלא שתהא שחיטה על מנת כן, אל תשחטוהו
על מנת לאכלו למחר, שאם תחשבו בו מחשבת
פסול — לא יהא לכם לרצון. דבר אחר: "לרצונכם",

35. ויקרא ז, טו.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

When an emotion is "born," it must be "incubated," i.e., matured, by the intellect. This is a process of seven "days," i.e., a sevenfold process—one for each of the seven basic emotions.

Only after the emotions are thus matured are they fit to be "an offering for God," i.e., become part of the psyche of a human being dedicated to God's service.⁷⁹

~ A CLOSER LOOK ~

[continued...] this ultimatum is being witnessed by at least ten adult Jewish males (one of which can be us), we must choose death. Otherwise, we must transgress the commandment.

- In cases of national religious suppression: If the government has outlawed the observance of Judaism and made its observance a capital crime, we must choose death rather than violate any commandment, even privately.

Suffering martyrdom in any of the cases where it is required is "sanctifying God's Name"; choosing not to suffer martyrdom when it is required is "desecrating God's Name."⁸⁰

In addition, any intentional, rebellious disobedience of God's will is a desecration of God's Name, and any fulfillment of God's will performed for its own sake rather than for some ulterior motive is a sanctification of God's Name.

Finally, any act that discredits the Torah or its effect on those who observe it—such as unethical or vulgar behavior by an observant Jew—is a desecration of God's Name, and any act that dignifies the Torah or its effect on those who observe it—thereby encouraging the study of the Torah and the observance of its commandments—is a sanctification of God's Name.⁸¹

80. *Mishneh Torah, Yesodei HaTorah* 5:1-4. One must also be prepared to sacrifice one's life in order to hasten the arrival of the Messiah (*Minchat Eleazar, Igrot Shapirin*, pp. 238 ff). 81. *Mishneh Torah, Yesodei HaTorah* 5:10-11.

Treatment of Young Animals

26 God spoke to Moses, saying:

27 **“When an ox, sheep, or goat is born, it must remain in its mother’s care for seven days; it will be accepted as a sacrifice for a fire-offering to God only from the eighth day of its life onward.** This rule does not apply to animals delivered through cesarean section.

28 With regard to a female equivalent of **an ox**—i.e., a cow—or a female **sheep or goat: you must not slaughter it and its offspring on the same day**, whether you slaughter the mother or her young first. This applies whether or not one of the animals is being slaughtered as a sacrifice.⁷⁶

The Thanksgiving-Offering, continued

29 You have been taught⁷⁷ that a thanksgiving offering must be eaten during the day it is offered up and/or the following night. In addition, **when you slaughter a thanksgiving feast-offering to God, you must slaughter it such that it will attain God’s favor for you**, i.e.,³⁰ with the intention that **it be eaten on that day** or the following night; **do not** slaughter it with the intention to **leave it over until morning**. Remember that **I**, who am commanding you concerning this, **am God**; therefore take My instructions seriously.

Martyrdom

31 **You must safeguard My commandments** by studying them thoroughly, **and then perform them. I am God**, who may be relied upon to reward you for complying with My will.⁷⁸

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

27 **When an ox, sheep, or goat is born, it must remain in its mother’s care for seven days; it will be accepted as a sacrifice for a fire-offering to God from the eighth day onward:** The mystical meaning of this law is as follows:

“Mother” signifies the intellect, since the intellect “gives birth” to the emotions. When the intellect recognizes the virtue of something, it “gives birth”

to an emotion of love for it; when it recognizes the undesirability of harmfulness of something, it “gives birth” to an emotion of hatred or fear for it; and so on.

The “animal” signifies the emotions, since animals are driven by their instinctive emotions rather than by intellect. The “animal” aspect of man is thus his array of emotions.

A CLOSER LOOK

[31-33] Martyrdom: Normally, we are not allowed to suffer martyrdom rather than transgress God’s commandments, meaning that if we are given the choice to transgress a commandment or die, we must transgress the commandment. The exceptions to this rule are as follows:

- The prohibitions of idolatry, forbidden acts of

fornication, and murder: If we are given the choice to commit these transgressions or be killed, we must choose death.

- In cases of public religious suppression: If we are being told, as a means of suppressing the observance of Judaism, to violate any of the other commandments on pain of death, and

⁷⁶. Chulin 78a; Mishneh Torah, Shechitah 12:1-2. Cf. Deuteronomy 22:6-7. ⁷⁷. Above, 7:15. ⁷⁸. Rashi on Exodus 6:2. ⁷⁹. Sichot Kodesh 5725, vol. 1, p. 25.

— ONKELOS —
 32 ולא תחללון ית שמא דקדשי
 ואתקדש בגו בני ישראל אנא יי
 מקדשכון. 33 דאפק תכון מארעא
 דמצרים למהוי לבון לאלה אנא
 יי. 23:1 ומליל יי עם משה למימר:
 2 מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון
 מועדיא דיי די תערעון יתהון
 מערעי קדיש אלין אנון מועדי:

32 וְלֹא תַחֲלִלּוּ אֶת־שֵׁם קֹדֶשִׁי וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה מִקְדָּשְׁכֶם: 33 הַמוֹצֵיא אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ
 מִצְרַיִם לְהִיּוֹת לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים אֲנִי יְהוָה: פ
 ◆ רביעי 23:1 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 2 דְּבַר אֶל־בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם
 מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֵלֶּה הֵם מוֹעֲדָי:

— RASHI —
 "וְהָיוּ לָא יָדִיעַ לְהוֹא לָךְ מִלְכָּא" וגו' — מצייל ולא
 מצייל, "יָדִיעַ לְהוֹא לָךְ" וגו': 33 הַמוֹצֵיא אֶתְכֶם. על
 מִנֵּת בֶּן: אֲנִי ה'. נֶאֱמַן לְשֵׁלֶם שָׁכַר: 2 דְּבַר אֶל בְּנֵי
 יִשְׂרָאֵל וגו' מוֹעֲדֵי ה'. עֲשֵׂה מוֹעֲדוֹת שִׁיחֵיו יִשְׂרָאֵל
 מְלָמְדִין בָּהֶם, שְׁמַעְבְּרִים אֶת הַשָּׁנָה עַל גְּלִיּוֹת
 שְׁנַעְקְרוּ מִמְּקוֹמָם לַעֲלוֹת לְרָגֶל, וְעֵדִין לֹא הִגִּיעוּ
 לִירוּשָׁלַיִם:

32 וְלֹא תַחֲלִלּוּ. לַעֲבֹר עַל דְּבָרֵי מִזִּידִין. מִמִּשְׁמַע
 שְׁנֶאֱמַר: "וְלֹא תַחֲלִלּוּ", מִזֶּה תִּלְמוּד לומר "וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי"?
 מִסֵּר עֲצָמָךְ וְקֹדֶשׁ שְׁמִי. יָכוֹל בְּהִידֵּד תִּלְמוּד לומר:
 "בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל". וְכִשְׁהוּא מוֹסֵר עֲצָמוֹ וְיִסֵּר
 עֲצָמוֹ עַל מִנֵּת לָמוֹת, שְׁכָל הַמוֹסֵר עֲצָמוֹ עַל מִנֵּת
 הֵנִס, אֵין עוֹשִׂין לוֹ נֶס, שְׁכֵן מְצִינוֹ בְּחִנְיָה מִשְׁאֵל
 וְעוֹרִיָּה, שְׁלֹא מִסֵּרוֹ עֲצָמָן עַל מִנֵּת הֵנִס, שְׁנֶאֱמַר:

36. דניאל ג, יח.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

concern: preserving human life. Inasmuch as the collective life of the Jewish people in exile is in danger—whether physically or spiritually, from assimilation and intermarriage—God is clearly obligated to liberate us from this vital crisis immediately.

For our part, we must constantly "remind" God of His obligation, both by demanding that He redeem us immediately and by reorienting our own consciousness away from the mentality of exile and toward the mentality of redemption.⁸⁹

You must not desecrate My holy Name, so that I may be sanctified among the Israelites. I am God, who sanctifies you. This verse describes the three-step process whereby we can bring God's presence into our everyday lives.

You must not desecrate: These words (ולא תחלל) also mean "you must not make a void." By virtue of our Divine souls, we are all innately continuously united with God. However, the materiality of life in the physical world can at times make us apathetic

or antagonistic to this connection, causing us to feel estranged from God, as it is written, "Surely, God's hand is not short, [preventing Him] from saving [you]; nor is His ear deaf, [preventing Him] from hearing [you]. [It only seemed this way] because your transgressions were separating you from your God."⁹⁰ We must therefore, first of all, make efforts not to allow a gap to develop between ourselves and God, by overcoming apathy and complying with God's will.

So that I may be sanctified: The Hebrew word for "sanctified" or "holy" (קדוש) means "separate," "beyond," or "transcendent." Meditating on God's transcendence (which is one of the main themes of the daily morning liturgy) while remaining simultaneously cognizant of His closeness to us will ignite the flames of our innate, rapturous love for Him. Thus, once we have eliminated the artificial gap between ourselves and God, we can fan the embers of our hitherto dormant souls into an enthusiastic blaze. We can arouse our innermost love for

~ A CLOSER LOOK ~

[2] The court must intercalate a month: Since the solar year is approximately 11 days longer than the lunar year, a "leap month" needs to be periodically intercalated in order to ensure that the holidays—which occur on specific days of the

months—occur in their proper seasons.⁹¹ When the Jewish calendar was fixed in the middle of the fourth century,⁹² seven out of every 19 years were designated as leap years, in which an extra month is added before Adar.⁹³

89. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 27, p. 175; *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 2, pp. 1265-1267. 90. Isaiah 59:2. 91. Below, v. 39; Deuteronomy 16:1. 92. See on v. 4, below. 93. *Mishneh Torah*, *Kidush HaChodesh* 4:1-2, etc.

32 You must not desecrate My holy Name—i.e., belittle Me in the estimation of other Israelites by consenting to disobey My commandments—even under pain of death. If I see fit, I may rescue you miraculously from martyrdom, and, it is true, doing so would enhance My estimation even more than your willingness to die rather than transgress My will. But you must not offer up your life with any such hope,⁸² for doing so taints the sincerity of your devotion, and I will therefore not rescue you if you offer up your life hoping for a miraculous delivery. Therefore, offer up your life without hope of delivery so that **I may** in fact rescue you miraculously—if I see fit—and thereby **be sanctified** in the onlookers' estimation.⁸³

This directive is compulsory only when you are **among** other **Israelites**—i.e., in the presence of ten adult male Jews⁸⁴—not when you are being threatened this way in private. **I am God, who sanctifies you** to be My people at all costs, and

33 who took you out of Egypt in order that you accept Me **as your God** unconditionally, even if this requires you to lay down your life. **I am God**, who may be relied upon to punish you for failing to fulfill this commandment."

The Sabbath and the Festivals

◆ *Fourth Reading 23:1* **God spoke to Moses, saying,**

2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'You have already been taught⁸⁵ that when you enter the Promised Land, you must observe three pilgrim festivals, which mark the ripening, harvesting, and ingathering of your yearly produce. I will now inform you of additional details regarding how you are to observe these festivals, and of the two High Holidays you must observe in addition.

Firstly, you must ensure that as many of the people as possible participate in these festivals. Thus, if during the month before Passover the court hears that some of those who live far from the Temple city have begun their pilgrimage but will not be able to arrive in time, they must intercalate a month into the calendar in order to give these pilgrims sufficient time to complete their journey.⁸⁶ The court should not hesitate to do this, for they have God's full authorization: With regard to **God's appointed holy days**, it is only with reference to **the ones that you**—through your representatives, the court—**will designate as designated holy occasions** that God will say, **"These are My appointed holy days."**

—∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞—

32 That I may be sanctified among the Israelites: The most flagrant desecration of God's Name is the exile, during which the world is bereaved of the Holy Temple and its spiritual radiance. The existential nature of exile is the concealment of Godliness in the straightjacket of natural cause and effect; exile thus gives the world the impression that God is powerless to overcome the forces of nature and history. In this context, the grandest sanctification of God's Name will occur in the messianic era.⁸⁷

As we have seen,⁸⁸ if God commands us to do something, it is because spiritually, He has obligated Himself, so to speak, to do the same thing. God thus keeps all the commandments in their cosmic sense. If this principle applies to all the commandments in general, it most certainly must apply to the cardinal commandment of sanctifying His Name! Thus, commencing the messianic era is, so to speak, imperative on His part.

This imperative also stems from another cardinal

82. See Daniel 3:17-18. 83. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 27, pp. 167-175. 84. *Sanhedrin* 74b. 85. Exodus 23:14-17, 34:18, 22-23. 86. See also below, v. 39; Deuteronomy 16:1. 87. Ezekiel 36:23. 88. Above, on 19:13.

— ONKELOS —

3 שְׁתֵּא יומין תתעבד עבדתא
וביומא שביעאה שבת שבתא
מערע קדיש כל עבידא לא
תעבדון שבתא היא קדם יי בכל
מותבניכון: 4 אלן מועדיא די
מערעי קדיש די תערעון יתהון
בזמניהון: 5 בירחא קדמאה
בארבעת עשרא לירחא בין
שמשיא פסחא קדם יי:

3 שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת
שַׁבְתוֹן מְקַרְא־לְךָ כָּל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה שַׁבַּת הוּא
לִיהוָה בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם: פ
4 אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה מְקַרְאֵי קָדֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר־תִּקְרְאוּ אוֹתָם
בְּמוֹעֲדָם: 5 בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ בֵּין
הָעֲרֵבִים פֶּסַח לִיהוָה:

— RASHI —

ה'. לְמַעַלָּה מְדַבֵּר בְּעִבּוּר שָׁנָה, וְכֵאן מְדַבֵּר בְּקִדּוּשׁ
הַחֹדֶשׁ: 5 בֵּין הָעֲרֵבִים. מִשֵּׁשׁ שָׁעוֹת וּלְמַעַלָּה: פֶּסַח
לֵה'. הַקֶּרֶבֶת קָרְבֵּן שְׁשֻׁמוֹ "פֶּסַח":

3 שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים. מַה עֲנִין שַׁבַּת אֶצֶל מוֹעֲדוֹת? לְלַמֶּדֶךָ
שְׁכָל הַמַּחֲלֵל אֶת הַמוֹעֲדוֹת — מַעֲלִין עָלָיו כְּאִלוֹ
חָלַל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת, וְכָל הַמְקִיִּם אֶת הַמוֹעֲדוֹת —
מַעֲלִין עָלָיו כְּאִלוֹ קִים אֶת הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת: 4 אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

agricultural cycle: Passover occurs when the produce begins to ripen, *Shavuot* when the wheat is harvested, and *Sukot* when the produce is gathered in from the fields.¹⁰¹

Allegorically, God refers to the Jewish people as His "produce."¹⁰² Just as a farmer sows grain in the earth in order to reap a much greater return, God "sows" Jewish souls in the physical world in order to enable them to accomplish much more than they can in their spiritual abode.

Continuing the analogy, just as a seed's outer coating must disintegrate before the seed can grow, our course, outer husk—our ego—must be negated in order for us to grow spiritually.¹⁰³

The following are God's appointed days, the designated holy occasions that you will designate to be such in their appointed time: The Hebrew word for "occasion" (מְקָרָא) literally means "a calling together [of people]," and is derived from the root that means "to call," "to read," (i.e., "call out"), and "to call forth" (קָרָא). It can thus also mean "that which is read," or "Scripture." Based on this, this verse can be interpreted as follows:

The following are God's appointed days: The festivals are ordained in the Torah, and as the sages tell us,¹⁰⁴ the Torah existed for "two thousand years" before the world was created.¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, these festivals could not be observed until the Torah was given to the Jewish people.¹⁰⁶ Until then, they were only "God's appointed days"; they existed merely as unfulfilled, abstract concepts.

The first step in concretizing the abstract potential of the festivals as they are written in the primordial

Torah is for us, the Jewish people, to study them in the Torah. Whenever a Jew studies the Torah, "the Holy One, blessed be He, reads along with him,"¹⁰⁷ meaning that we draw increasingly more of God's transcendent holiness into the Torah, each time infusing the skeletal framework of the text with greater new revelations of Divinity.¹⁰⁸

The designated holy occasions (or: "the callers-forth of holiness"): However, infusing the Torah with transcendent Divinity is not the ultimate purpose of creation; rather, we are bidden to infuse mundane reality with transcendent Divinity, thereby transforming the physical world into God's home. This was accomplished only when we began actually observing the festivals, thereby eliciting ("calling forth") holiness and investing it within them. In so doing, we take mundane time and transform it into sacred time.

That you will designate to be such in their appointed time: We are only able to accomplish this, however, by "designating" (or "calling forth") the festivals, which here means preparing for them spiritually, so that we can experience their holiness "in their appointed time." It is a mistake to think that spirituality can be experienced without proper preparation. There are exceptions, but in general, it takes effort to divest ourselves of our accrued materialism, opening ourselves up to spiritual awareness. Among the preparations that enable us to experience the spiritual dimension of the festivals are immersion in a *mikveh*, giving charity, and studying and meditating on the inner dimension of the Torah.¹⁰⁹

101. See Rabbeinu Bachye on Exodus 13:4. 102. See Jeremiah 2:3; Hosea 2:25. 103. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 36, pp. 82-85. See also *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 5, pp. 169-176. 104. *Bereishit Rabbah* 8:2. 105. See "Background" before Genesis 1:1. 106. *Y. Rosh HaShanah* 1:3. 107. *Par. Tana d'vei Eliahu* 18; *Yalkut Shimoni*, *Eichah* §1034. 108. *Zohar* 3:94b; *Igeret HaKodesh* 14. 109. *Sefer HaSichot* 5696, p. 144; *Hitva'aduyot* 5716, vol. 2, pp. 338-343.

3 Secondly, an integral aspect of observing these festivals is refraining from work; this aspect of their observance has not yet been mentioned. As you know,⁹⁴ you are required to refrain from work once a week—on the Sabbath: During a **six-day period** each week, **work may be performed, but on the seventh day** of every week, **it is a complete rest day**, which is also a **holy occasion** that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers.⁹⁵ **You must not perform any work on it. It is a Sabbath to God in all your dwelling places.** Similarly, you must not work on the festivals, and this prohibition is so serious that if you desecrate the festivals by working on them, God will consider this as severe an offense as if you had desecrated the Sabbath, and conversely, if you keep the festivals, God will reward you as if you had kept the Sabbath.⁹⁶

4 Thirdly, as you know, God instructed me regarding how to calculate the appearance of the new moon each month and how to recognize it, in order to determine when each new month should start.⁹⁷ God is now delegating this responsibility to the court; based on their calculations and the testimony of witnesses, they will determine when each new month will start. Since the festivals are observed on specific days of the month, it follows that the court will be determining when you will observe these festivals. Thus, **the following are God's appointed holy days, i.e., the designated holy occasions that you**—through your representatives, the court—**will designate to be such in their appointed time**, as opposed to the Sabbath, the day of whose weekly recurrence is fixed:

5 As you know, **in the afternoon**—i.e., between noon and sunset—**of the 14th day of Nisan, the first month**, you must offer up **the Passover sacrifice to God**.⁹⁸

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

God, the fire that burns *among* (literally, “within”) every one of us, in our heart of hearts, and aspires to Divine sanctity and transcendence.

Among the Israelites: The word for “among” (בהוך) also means “within,” meaning that persistently meditating on God’s transcendence will allow this renewed enthusiasm to penetrate our hearts, saturating our consciousness with love of God.

I am God who sanctifies you: God will then respond to our initiative, revealing His transcendence in our lives. The pronoun “I” in this verse refers to God’s essence (which is normally beyond any revela-

tion; the Name *Havayah* then describes the process whereby God “contracts” His essence and manifests it in our lives, thereby transforming us into “sanctified” human beings, living even our mundane lives on the plane of God’s transcendence. In this context, the fire of our love for God is the “kiln” in which we fashion vessels to contain and retain transcendent Divine consciousness, these vessels being our study of the Torah and observance of its commandments.⁹⁹

4 **The following are God’s appointed days:** The three pilgrim festivals mark the key points of the

❧ A CLOSER LOOK ❧

[4] **They will determine:** The system of determining what day should be “sanctified” as the first day of each month—based on the Sanhedrin’s calculations and the testimony of witnesses—remained in force until the middle of the fourth century CE, when Hillel II, who was then head of the Sanhedrin, instituted the use of a fixed calendar, which is the calendar still used today. Hillel II was

forced to abandon the former system due to the decimation of the Jewish population of the Land of Israel, the persecution of the Jews by the Byzantine government (rendering collecting the testimony of witnesses too dangerous), and the imminent dissolution of the Sanhedrin.¹⁰⁰ The original system will be reinstituted with the renewal of the Sanhedrin in the messianic Redemption.

94. Exodus 20:8, 31:12-17. 95. Rashi on v. 35, below. 96. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, pp. 242-245. 97. Exodus 12:1-2. 98. Ibid. 12:3-13, 21-28, 43-50, 23:18, 34:25. 99. *Likutei Torah* 2:32c, 33b. 100. *Mishneh Torah*, *Kidush HaChodesh* 5:3.

ONKELOS
6 ובחמשת עשר יומא לירחא
הדין חגא דפסירא קדם יי שבועא
יומין פסיר תיכלון: 7 ביומא
קדמא מערע קדיש יהי לבון
כל עבדית פלחון לא תעבדון:
8 ותקרבון קרבנא קדם יי שבועא
יומין ביומא שביעאה מערע קדיש
כל עבדית פלחון לא תעבדון:
9 ומליל יי עם משה למימר: 10
מלל עם בני ישראל ותימר להון
ארי תעלון לארעא די אגא יחב
לבון ותחצדון ית חצדה ותיחצדון
ית עמרא ריש חצדכון לות כהנא:
11 וירם ית עמרא קדם יי לרעא
לבון מבתר יומא טבא ירימנא
כהנא:

6 וּבַחֲמֵשֶׁת עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה חַג הַמִּצּוֹת לַיהוָה
שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִצּוֹת תֹּאכְלוּ: 7 בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרֵא-
קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-מְלָאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:
8 וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי
מִקְרֵא-קֹדֶשׁ כָּל-מְלָאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: פ
9 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: 10 דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם כִּי-תֵבְאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נֹתֵן
לָכֶם וְקִצְרֹתֶם אֶת-קִצְיָהּ וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית
קִצְיֹרְכֶם אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן: 11 וְהֵנִיף אֶת-הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
לְרִצְנֹכְכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשָּׁבֹת יִנִּיפֻהּ הַכֹּהֵן:

RASHI

כהנים, דקתני: יכול אף חלו של מועד יהא אטור
במלאכת עבודה וכו': 10 ראשית קצירכם. שתהא
ראשונה לקציר: עמר. עשירית האפפה כף היתה
שמה, כמו: "וימדו בעמר": 11 והניף. כל תנופה
מוליך ומביא, מעלה ומוריד. מוליך ומביא — לעצר
רוחות רעות, מעלה ומוריד — לעצר טללים רעים:
לרצונכם. אם תקריבו כמשפט הזה, יהיה לרצון לכם:
ממחרת השבת. ממחרת יום טוב הראשון של פסח,
שאם אתה אומר שבת בראשית, אי אתה יודע
איזהו:

8 והקרבתם אשה וגו'. הם המוספין האמורים
בפרשת פינחס. ולמה נאמרו כאן? לומר לה, שאין
המוספין מעבדין זה את זה: והקרבתם אשה לה'.
מכל מקום, אם אין פרים — הבא אילים, ואם אין
פרים ואילים — הבא כבשים: שבעת ימים. כל מקום
שנאמר "שבעת", שם דבר הוא — שבוש של ימים,
שייטיני"א בלעזי, וכן כל לשון "שמונת", "ששת",
"חמשת", "שלשת": מלאכת עבודה. אפלו מלאכות
החשובות לכם עבודה וצורך, שיש חסרון כיס
בבטלה שלהן, כגון דבר האבד. כך הכנתי מתורת

37. קבוצה של שבעה. 38. שמות טז, יח.

A CLOSER LOOK

[7] **Mundane work:** Throughout the Torah, the activity from which we are bidden to refrain on the Sabbath¹²⁵ (and *Yom Kippur*¹²⁶) is described simply as "work" (מלאכה), whereas the activity from which we are bidden to refrain on the festivals is called "mundane work" (מלאכת עבודה).¹²⁷ The definition of this latter term is derived from the Torah's first description of cessation from work on a festival: "You must celebrate the first day [of Passover] as a holy occasion and the seventh day as a holy occasion, on which no work may be done; only [work] that is required [to be done to prepare] any person or animal's food—that alone may be done for you."¹²⁸ Thus, whereas the term "work" refers to all 39 categories of work prohibited on the Sabbath,¹²⁹ the term "mundane work" refers only to those categories of work that are

not necessary for the preparation of food, i.e., all but harvesting, gathering into piles and binding into sheaves, threshing, winnowing, separating, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking and cooking, kindling, trapping, slaughtering, and carrying. The Oral Torah informs us that these categories of work are permitted on festivals even not for the express purpose of preparing food.

The sages, however, wary that allowing all these activities on festivals would tempt people to postpone their festival preparations until the day itself, thus preventing them from enjoying the festival as the Torah intended, permitted only separating, kneading, baking and cooking, kindling, carrying, and limited varieties of the other categories of work.¹³⁰

125. Exodus 20:9-10, 31:14-15, 35:2; above, v. 3; Deuteronomy 5:13-14, 16:8. 126. Above, 16:29; below, vv. 28, 30-31; Numbers 29:7. 127. Here; below, vv. 8, 21, 25, 35-36; Numbers 28:18, 25-26, 29:1, 12, 35. 128. Exodus 12:16. 129. Ibid. 20:9. 130. Beitzah 5:2; Megillah 1:5; Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 495.

6 As you also know, **on the 15th day of that month** begins Passover, **the Festival of Matzos** in honor of God; **for a seven-day period** beginning this day **you must eat matzos** whenever you would otherwise eat bread.

7 **You must celebrate the first day** of Passover **as a holy occasion** that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers,¹¹⁰ and on which **you must not perform any mundane work** even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss.

8 **You must** collectively, as a nation, **bring a fire-offering to God** every day **for a seven-day period** beginning this day, in addition to the daily communal offerings, as will be detailed later.¹¹¹ **You must also celebrate the seventh day** of Passover **as a holy occasion** that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers,¹¹² and on which **you must not perform any mundane work**, even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss. On the intervening days, however, you may perform mundane work if you would incur irretrievable loss by refraining from doing so."¹¹³

9 **God spoke to Moses, saying,**

10 **"Speak to the Israelites and say to them** further: 'As you have been taught,¹¹⁴ **when**¹¹⁵ **you enter the land that I am giving you and you** are about to **reap its harvest, you must first**, on the second day of Passover, **bring** collectively to the Tabernacle—through your representatives, the court—**an omer** (i.e., one-tenth of an *ephah*¹¹⁶ [2.5 liters or 2.6 quarts]) of barley,¹¹⁷ **as the beginning of your harvest**, and give it **to the priest**. Only after this may you harvest produce for your own use.¹¹⁸

11 The priest **must wave** this *omer* of barley **before God**, i.e., move it to the north and back to the starting position, then to the south and back, then to the east and back, and then to the west and back, and then raise it and lower it to the starting position, and finally lower it and raise it back to the starting position.¹¹⁹ The horizontal movements will neutralize destructive winds, and the vertical movements will neutralize destructive dews.¹²⁰ If you perform this rite properly, **it will attain God's favor for you. The priest must wave it on the day after** the first day of Passover, the latter having been designated as **the day of rest** from mundane work. After it has been waved, you must treat it as a regular grain-offering: bring it to the southwest corner of the Altar, remove and burn up its memorial portion on the Altar; the rest must be eaten by the priests.¹²¹

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

6 **On the 15th day of that month begins the Festival of Matzos:** Although throughout the Torah, this festival is usually referred to as "the Festival of Matzos,"¹²² in common usage it is usually called "Passover." (The term "Passover" in the Torah almost always¹²³ refers to the sacrifice associated with this holiday rather than to the holiday itself.) Accord-

ing to the Chassidic sage Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev,¹²⁴ the two names reflect two different perspectives on the holiday.

God wishes to stress the uniqueness and valor of the Jewish people; He therefore focuses on the matzah. Matzah recalls how the Jews left Egypt in such haste that they did not have time to let their dough

110. Rashi on v. 35, below. 111. Numbers 28:19-24. 112. Rashi on v. 35, below. 113. Exodus 12:14-20, 13:3-8, 14-15, 23:15, 34:18. 114. Above, 2:14-16. 115. Rashi on Deuteronomy 32:3. 116. Exodus 16:36. 117. Rashi on Exodus 34:22 and on v. 16, below. 118. Deuteronomy 16:9. 119. See Rashi on *Menachot* 62a, s.v. *Molich uMeivi*. 120. Cf. Exodus 29:24. 121. Above, 2:8-10. *Mishneh Torah*, *Temidin uMusafin* 7:12. 122. Exodus 23:15, 34:18; here; and Deuteronomy 16:16. 123. With the exception of Exodus 12:11 and 34:25. 124. *Kedushat Levi*, *Bo*; *Sichot Kodesh* 5737, vol. 1, p. 629.

— ONKELOS —

12 ותעבדון ביום ארמוֹתֵיכֶם
 ית עמרא אמר שלים בר שתה
 לעלתא קדם יי: 13 ומנחתה תרין
 עשרונים סלתא דפילא במשח
 קרבנא קדם יי לאתקבלא ברענא
 ונסבה חמרא רבעות הינא:
 14 ולחם וקלי ופרוכן לא תיכלון
 עד כרן יומא הדין עד איתואיכון
 ית קרבן אלהכון קים עלם לדריכון
 בכל מותבניכון: 15 ותמנן לכון
 מבתר יומא טבא מיום איתואיכון
 ית עמרא דארמוֹתא שבע שבוען
 שלמן יהיון:

12 וְעִשְׂיֶתֶם בַּיּוֹם הַנִּיפְכֶם אֶת־הָעֹמֶר כֶּבֶשׂ תְּמִים בֶּן־
 שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה לַיהוָה: 13 וּמִנְחָתוֹ שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֵלֶת
 בְּלוּלָה בַשֶּׁמֶן אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה רֵיחַ נִיחָח וּנְסָכָה {וּנְסָכוֹ} יֵין
 רְבִיעֵת הַהֵיזֵן: 14 וְלֶחֶם וְקָלִי וּכְרָמֶל לֹא תֹאכְלוּ עַד־עֶצֶם
 הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַד הִבֵּיאֲכֶם אֶת־קֶרְבֶּן אֱלֹהֵיכֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם
 לְדִרְתֵיכֶם בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם: ס

15 וּסְפֹרְתֶם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הִבֵּיאֲכֶם
 אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה:

— RASHI —

מכאן, שההדש נהג בחוצה לארץ, ויש אומרים: לא
 בא אלא ללמד, שלא נצטוו על ההדש אלא לאחר
 ירשה וישיבה, משפכשו וחלקו: 15 מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת.
 מִמַּחֲרַת יוֹם טוֹב: תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה. מלמד שמתחיל
 ומונה מבערב, שאם לא כן, אינן תמימות:

12 וְעִשְׂיֶתֶם כֶּבֶשׂ. חובה לעמר הוא בא: 13 וּמִנְחָתוֹ.
 מנחת נסכיו: שני עשרונים. כפולה היתה: וּנְסָכָה יֵין
 רְבִיעֵת הַהֵיזֵן. אף על פי שמנחתו כפולה, אין נסכיו
 כפולים: 14 וְקָלִי. קמח עשוי מכרמל רך שמיבשין
 אותו בתנור: וּכְרָמֶל. הן קליות שקורין גרניי"ש:
 בכל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם. נחלקו בו חכמי ישראל¹⁴⁰: יש שלמדו

39. נרעניים. 40. קידושין לו, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

of Glory, the manna, the quails, the well, and all
 the incidents that occurred en route to Mount Sinai
 combined to ready them for the Divine revelation.
 Therefore, the revelation at Mount Sinai was a last-
 ing and meaningful one, which indeed transformed
 them and us, their progeny, for all time. It was here
 that they received the full manifestation of their
 Divine souls.

We undergo this same dynamic in our annual reliv-
 ing of the Exodus and the Giving of the Torah.
 God allows us, individually and collectively, to
 experience a rebirth every year at Passover. Just as
 God miraculously renews nature each spring, He
 re-inspires us each Passover, freeing us from the
 wintry, depressing bondage to the forces of phys-
 ical and spiritual entropy rooted in the materialistic
 consciousness of our human/animal soul. However,
 since this quantum leap (*Pesach*, the Hebrew name
 of Passover, means "jump") is largely His doing, it
 cannot transform us in any lasting way. That can be
 accomplished only by a renewed acceptance of the
 Torah on *Shavuot*, and the way we prepare for *Sha-*
vuot is through counting the *omer*.

Our human/animal soul comprises both intellect
 and emotions. When the Temple stood, the *omer*

offering rectified the animal intellect (since, as
 the sages note, grain promotes the maturation of
 the intellect¹⁴¹); it is therefore the only communal
 grain-offering of barley,¹⁴² which is primarily used
 as animal food. Nowadays we can only substitute
 the study of the laws and significance of the *omer*
 offering in order to accomplish what the offering
 itself should. Since even the human/animal intel-
 lect is predisposed to intellectuality, it is a relatively
 simple process to refine it. All that it is necessary
 to change is the subject matter, reorienting its focus
 toward Godliness. Therefore, this process can be
 accomplished by one act, in one day.

Rectifying the emotions of the human/animal soul,
 in contrast, requires more arduous work, since the
 emotions themselves have to be recast, not only
 reoriented. This process therefore is more compli-
 cated, and is accomplished (both when the Temple
 is standing and when it is not) by the seven-week
 process of counting the *omer*.

Our emotional makeup, including that of our
 human/animal souls, derives from the emotional
 attributes through which God created the world
 and continues to relate to it. As we have seen,¹⁴³
 there are seven of these emotional traits:¹⁴⁴

141. *Berachot* 40a; *Sanhedrin* 70b. 142. Rashi on 23:16, from *Menachot* 84b. 143. "Inner Dimensions" on "Background" before
 Genesis 1:1. 144. The emotional experiences corresponding to *netzach*, *hod*, and *yesod* are not explicitly named in the classic texts
 of Chassidism. They are listed here according to the system proposed in *Sod HaShem Lireiv*.

12 On the same day as you wave the omer of barley, you must offer up an unblemished lamb in its first year as an ascent-offering to God associated with this omer of barley.

13 The grain-offering accompanying this lamb must be **two-tenths** of an *ephah* of **fine flour mixed with oil** offered up on the Altar as a **fire-offering to please God**, instead of the usual one-tenth of an *ephah* prescribed as the grain-offering accompanying an ascent-offering lamb, as you have seen¹³¹ and will be taught later.¹³² Even though its grain-offering must be double the usual amount, **its libation** must be only **a quarter of a hin** [1 liter or quart] **of wine**, as usual.¹³³

14 You must not eat (a) **bread**, (b) anything made out of flour produced from oven-parched kernels, (c) **fresh kernels** themselves, or (d) anything else made out of produce from the new harvest **until this very day**, i.e., **until you bring your God's sacrifice**. This is an **eternal rule throughout your generations** and **in all your places of residence**, even outside the Land of Israel (unlike other agricultural commandments, the majority of which apply only in the Land of Israel). Alternatively, this rule will apply only in the Land of Israel and only once you have conquered it and divided it up among yourselves.¹³⁴

Although you may eat from the new grain harvest from this date onward, you may not bring any grain-offerings from the new grain harvest (other than the just-mentioned prescribed omer of barley) until *Shavuot*, as will be described presently.

15 Starting on the day after of the day of rest on the 15th of Nisan—i.e., **from the night preceding the day on which you bring the omer of barley as a wave-offering—you must count for yourselves seven weeks**. You must begin counting on the *night* of the 16th of Nisan in order that **these seven weeks be complete weeks**, i.e., that each week comprise seven full days.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

rise,¹³⁵ highlighting their implicit faith and their willingness to follow God wherever He directed them to go.¹³⁶ We, on the other hand, relate to the holiday as an opportunity to praise and thank God; we therefore refer to it as *Passover*, recalling God's great miracles, particularly when He "passed over"¹³⁷ the Jewish houses and brought His plagues only upon the Egyptians.¹³⁸

15 You must count for yourselves seven weeks: Even though, when the Temple is not standing, we cannot offer up the omer of barley on the second day of *Passover*, we still commence counting the 50 days "of the omer" from that day. The days of "counting the omer" act as the bridge between our annual reliving of the Exodus from Egypt (on *Passover*) and our annual reliving of the Giving of the Torah (on *Shavuot*).

As we have seen,¹³⁹ the Jewish people did not

"earn" the Exodus; in fact, God had to "artificially" give them something to do in order to merit their redemption in at least some small way. Thus, God took the initiative in the Exodus, pulling His people out of their spiritual and physical bondage despite their unworthiness. Because they were not redeemed on their own merits, their redemption could not transform them in any way. Spiritually, their human/animal souls remained unrefined despite the experience; whatever spiritual arousal they experienced was merely a reaction to processes that took place entirely outside of them. For this reason, the spiritual effect of the Exodus was temporary; the spiritual danger represented by Egypt still remains.¹⁴⁰

In contrast, the Jews were much more prepared for the Giving of the Torah. The Exodus, the Splitting of the Sea, the lessons they learned from the Clouds

131. Exodus 29:40. 132. Numbers 15:4. 133. Ibid. 15:5. 134. Cf. Numbers 15:18, 26:53; Deuteronomy 12:10. 135. Exodus 12:39. 136. Exodus 12:39; Jeremiah 2:2. 137. Exodus 12:23. 138. *Sichot Kodesh* 5741, vol. 4, pp. 236-237. 139. Exodus 12:3. 140. See on Exodus 14:5.

You must count for yourselves seven weeks: The process just described is alluded to in the very wording of this commandment. The word for “you must count” (וּסְפַרְתֶּם) can also be translated as “you must make bright.” Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi thus interprets this verse as follows:

You must make yourselves bright: You must purify yourselves until your inner holiness shines forth, illuminating your lives. This is accomplished by working on your—

Seven weeks; they must be complete: Refine the seven emotional attributes of your human/animal soul, transforming each one into a complete array comprising all seven emotions itself.¹⁴⁵

You must count for yourselves seven weeks: An additional way of “making ourselves shine” is illustrated by the following story:

Gavriel and his wife Chana Rivka, respected citizens of Vitebsk, had been married for twenty-five years but had not been blessed with children. Their one joy was sharing their wealth with the needy. Whenever Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi sent emissaries to collect money for a good cause, they were among the first to donate.

Sadly, because of persecution from the authorities, Gavriel lost all of his money. The next time an appeal arrived from Rabbi Shneur Zalman on behalf of some poor prisoners, Gavriel was heartbroken that he couldn't take part. Chana Rivka, however, took action. She sold some of her jewelry and gathered the coins to send with her husband to the Rebbe. But first, she scrubbed every coin until it shone, and prayed that their luck should also begin to shine.

When the Rebbe saw the shining coins, he said: “Of all the gold and silver vessels in the Tabernacle, the copper of the Laver was the shiniest, for the women donated it joyfully and selflessly.” He then asked Gavriel where the coins were from. Gavriel was forced to tell the Rebbe about his financial straits and Chana Rivka's selfless act.

The Rebbe leaned his head upon his hands for a while. He then blessed Gavriel and Chana Rivka with children, long life, wealth, and remarkable charm. He instructed him to close his shop and become a diamond dealer. From then until his passing at the age of 110, Gavriel and his wife enjoyed great wealth.

The monetary value of the coins Gavriel and his wife gave to charity was not changed by Chana Rivka's scrubbing, but because of the joy and selflessness with which she donated them, their spiritual worth became infinitely greater, enough to elicit sufficient Divine beneficence to change reality.¹⁴⁷

Starting on the day after the day of rest: As we have just explained, the counting of the *omer* is an arduous process of self-refinement for which each

of us must assume personal responsibility. Nonetheless, since “taming” the human/animal soul requires going against its nature, we would not be able to undertake this challenge without some initial propulsion from God. This is why the count can only begin on the second day of Passover, after God has redeemed us from the restrictions of nature by taking us out of our collective and individual Egypt.

The Torah therefore, in this verse, refers to the first day of Passover as “the day of rest,” i.e., the Sabbath. As the last day of the week of creation, the Sabbath is the pinnacle of time. Nevertheless, inasmuch as both space and time are the contexts within which God created this finite world, even the Sabbath is finite. By telling us to begin to count the *omer* from “the day after the Sabbath,” the Torah is ensuring that we set upon this task supported by God's transcendent energy, which is beyond the limits of time.

Since the revelation of this transcendent Divinity occurs specifically on the first day of Passover, it is clear that the Torah means for us to begin counting the *omer* on the day after that day rather than on the day after the Sabbath (i.e., Sunday), as a literal reading of the verse might imply.¹⁴⁸

Nonetheless, the Boethusians, a heretical Jewish group who lived toward the end of the Second Temple era, took this phrase literally and therefore maintained exactly that. They insisted that counting the *omer* should always begin on a Sunday. In order to force the Temple service to follow their interpretation of this verse, they even went so far as to try to rig the rabbinical court's declarations of the New Month so Passover would occur on the Sabbath.¹⁴⁹ The sages of the Talmud, in defense of the understanding of this verse as passed down from Moses (i.e., that the “Sabbath” referred to in this verse refers to the rest observed on the first day of Passover) offered no less than five separate textual references disproving the assertion of the Boethusians.¹⁵⁰

The reason why the Boethusians were disposed to insist that counting the *omer* begin on a Sunday was because they felt that the only way such a lofty endeavor could be attempted was if it was preceded immediately by the spirituality of the Sabbath. True, we are enjoined to celebrate both the Sabbath and the festivals with fine food and fine clothing, but whereas the sublime sanctity of the Sabbath elevates these material indulgences to experiences of spiritual delight, the spirit of the festivals is more that of joy and elation. Thus, the requirement to eat festive meals is greater on the festivals than it is on the Sabbath;¹⁵³ we even have to be warned against undesirable effects of overindulgence.¹⁵⁴ The Boethusians therefore reasoned that such sensual

145. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 266-269; *Reshimot* 38, pp. 23-25; *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 22, pp. 447-448. 146. *HaYom Yom*, 10 Iyar. 147. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 4, pp. 1300-1301. 148. *HaTamin*, vol. 2, pp. 623-633; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 1, pp. 269-270. 149. See, for example, *Rosh HaShanah* 22b. 150. *Menachot* 65a-66a.

Name		Inner Emotional Experience	
<i>Chesed</i>	Loving-kindness	<i>Ahavah</i>	Love
<i>Gevurah</i>	Severity	<i>Yirah</i>	Fear
<i>Tiferet</i>	Beauty	<i>Rachamim</i>	Mercy, empathy
<i>Netzach</i>	Victory	<i>Bitachon</i>	Confidence
<i>Hod</i>	Thanksgiving	<i>Temimut</i>	Sincerity
<i>Yesod</i>	Foundation	<i>Emet</i>	Truth
<i>Malchut</i>	Kingdom	<i>Shiflut</i>	Humility

Figure 1. The Seven Emotions

In our childhood, these emotions are “one-dimensional,” i.e., absolute and unmitigated. We see that children are intensely emotional, reacting extremely to whatever pleases or displeases them. In contrast, the emotions of mature adults have been tempered by their intellect, so they are less extreme and intense. On the other hand, it is fairly easy to calm a child’s emotions, since they are not as stable as those of an adult, whereas those of an adult, being more solidly grounded in the intellect, are harder to change. Thus, the process of maturation may be described as the process whereby the intellect learns how to influence the emotions.

This is the process we undergo through counting the *omer*. Each week, in turn, we refine one of the seven emotions of our human/animal soul by submitting it to the guidance of the intellect. The hallmark of an emotion that has been matured by the intellect is that it can function harmoniously with the other emotions. Thus, the maturation of an

emotion is expressed by its development into a full array of seven emotional attributes in its own right, through which it can include the other emotions in its own self-expression.

For example, when a parent hits a child’s hand to keep him from touching fire, this is an act of severity, but it is motivated by kindness. It is therefore termed “severity of kindness.” Conversely, we are taught that when God allows the wicked to prosper in this world, it is in order to reward them for all the good they have done here so their corrective punishment in the afterlife can be meted out to them unmitigatedly. This would be termed an act of “kindness of severity,” since the act of kindness is motivated by strict justice.

During the seven days of each week, we add another emotional dimension to the emotion we are focusing on that week. The full process, therefore, unfolds as follows:

	1 st Week	2 nd Week	3 rd Week	4 th Week	5 th Week	6 th Week	7 th Week
1 st Day	kindness of kindness	kindness of severity	kindness of beauty	kindness of victory	kindness of thanksgiving	kindness of foundation	kindness of kingdom
2 nd Day	severity of kindness	severity of severity	severity of beauty	severity of victory	severity of thanksgiving	severity of foundation	severity of kingdom
3 rd Day	beauty of kindness	beauty of severity	beauty of beauty	beauty of victory	beauty of thanksgiving	beauty of foundation	beauty of kingdom
4 th Day	victory of kindness	victory of severity	victory of beauty	victory of victory	victory of thanksgiving	victory of foundation	victory of kingdom
5 th Day	thanksgiving of kindness	thanksgiving of severity	thanksgiving of beauty	thanksgiving of victory	thanksgiving of thanksgiving	thanksgiving of foundation	thanksgiving of kingdom
6 th Day	foundation of kindness	foundation of severity	foundation of beauty	foundation of victory	foundation of thanksgiving	foundation of foundation	foundation of kingdom
7 th Day	kingdom of kindness	kingdom of severity	kingdom of beauty	kingdom of victory	kingdom of thanksgiving	kingdom of foundation	kingdom of kingdom

Figure 2. The Seven Emotions during the Seven Weeks of Counting the *Omer*

Each day thus presents us with a very specific and clear objective: to work on and refine one aspect of our human/animal soul’s emotional makeup. Through this process, this soul matures and is

ready to welcome the renewed manifestation of our Divine soul that takes place when we relive the Giving of the Torah on *Shavuot*.¹⁴⁵

— ONKELOS —

16 עד מִמָּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׂבִיעִית תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם
וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה: 17 מִמּוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם
תָּבִיאוּ | לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה שְׁתֵּים שָׁנִי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֶלֶת תַּהֲיֶינָה
חֶמֶץ תִּאֲפֶינָה בַּפּוּרִים לַיהוָה:

— RASHI —

הַחֲדָשׁ. וְאֵם תֹּאמַר: הֲרֵי קִרְבָּה מִנְחַת הָעֶמֶר? אֵינָה
כְּשֶׁאֵר כָּל הַמִּנְחוֹת, שֶׁהִיא בָּאָה מִן הַשְּׁעוּרִים:
17 מִמּוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם. וְלֹא מִחוּצָה לְאֶרֶץ: לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה.
לֶחֶם תְּרוּמָה הַמּוֹרָם לְשֵׁם גְּבוּהָ, וְזוֹ הִיא "הַמִּנְחָה
הַחֲדָשָׁה" הָאֲמוּרָה לְמַעַלָּה: בַּפּוּרִים. רֹאשׁוֹנָה לְכָל
הַמִּנְחוֹת, אֵף לְמִנְחַת קִנְאוֹת הַבָּאָה מִן הַשְּׁעוּרִים, לֹא
תִקְרַב מִן הַחֲדָשׁ קֹדֶם לַשְּׁתֵּי הַלֶּחֶם:

16 הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׂבִיעִית. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ: "שְׁבוּעָתָא שְׂבִיעִיתָא":
עַד מִמָּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׂבִיעִית תִּסְפְּרוּ. וְלֹא "עַד" בְּכֻלָּל,
וְהֵן אֲרָבַעִים וְתִשְׁעָה יוֹם: חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה
חֲדָשָׁה לָהּ. בְּיוֹם הַחֲמִשִּׁים תִּקְרִיבוּהָ, וְאָמַר אֲנִי: זֶה
מִדְּרָשׁוֹ, אֲבָל פְּשׁוּטוֹ: "עַד מִמָּחֶרֶת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׂבִיעִית,
שֶׁהוּא יוֹם חֲמִשִּׁים, תִּסְפְּרוּ", וּמִקְרָא מְסֻרָס הוּא:
מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה. הִיא הַמִּנְחָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה שְׁהוּבָאָה מִן

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

Since the fiftieth gate is a gift from God, we do not count the fiftieth day ourselves. Yet, the Torah (at least literally) directs us to "count 50 days," accounting the fiftieth day as if we do count it, since the revelation of the fiftieth gate on *Shavuot* depends upon our cumulative efforts to attain the 49 preceding gates during the 49 days of "counting the omer."¹⁵⁹

In addition, the directive to "count 50 days" may be understood as exhorting us to reach beyond our potential. Everyone's 49 gates are different, depending on their present level of Divine consciousness. Although we cannot reach what is presently our fiftieth gate on our own, once we have expanded our Divine consciousness, a new array of 50 gates appears before us. Thus, to reach the "fiftieth gate," in this sense, means to ascend beyond our present plane of consciousness to a new horizon of Divine awareness with its own, new 50 gates.¹⁶⁰

The ultimate ascent in Divine consciousness, of course, will occur in the messianic future. Thus, counting the *omer* also prepares us for the ultimate revelation of the Torah's deepest dimensions in the messianic era.¹⁶¹

17 They must be baked leavened: The only other leavened grain-offerings offered up in the Temple are the 10 leavened loaves (out of the total 40) accompanying the thanksgiving-offering,¹⁶² which is only brought as the offering of an individual. The two leavened loaves of *Shavuot* are the only communal grain-offering that is leavened. Clearly, then, the fact that this grain-offering is required excep-

tionally to be leavened expresses an essential facet of its meaning.

Furthermore, we have noted above¹⁶³ how *Shavuot* is in all respects a culmination of the process of renewal and maturation that began at Passover, on which leavened grain is severely prohibited. Thus, the passage from Passover to *Shavuot* appears to be symbolized by the passage from unleavened to leavened bread.

The difference between leavened and unleavened bread, as we have seen,¹⁶⁴ is that the former rises, therefore signifying ego, self-awareness, and self-orientation, while the latter remains flat, therefore signifying self-abnegation and selflessness. This being the case, it would seem that the Torah should prohibit the consumption of leavened grain altogether, no only on Passover.

Indeed, in the Temple the overwhelming majority of grain-offerings are unleavened, and even the few leavened ones that are prescribed are explicitly prohibited from being offered up on the Altar.¹⁶⁵ The open revelation of the Divine presence in the Temple demands that we evince almost absolute self-abnegation while there.

In contrast, when we leave the Temple precincts in order to fulfill our Divine mission in the material world, which is naturally apathetic or even antagonistic to Divine consciousness, we have to evince at least a modicum of self-assertion in order to impose our Divine vision on a reluctant or inimical world. Therefore, outside the Temple, leavened bread is permitted.

[continues...]

159. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 3, p. 976, p. 996. 160. *Ibid.*, p. 996, note 8. 161. Rashi on Song of Songs 1:2; *Vayikra Rabbah* 13:3. *Sefer HaSichot* 5750, vol. 2, p. 444. 162. Above, 7:12-13. 163. On v. 15. 164. "Inner Dimensions" on Exodus 13:7. 165. Above, 2:11-12.

16 You must continue to count until but not including **the day after the seventh week**, namely, **the fiftieth day**, which will be the festival of *Shavuot* and on which **you must bring a grain-offering** of wheat **to God** from the **new** crop, as follows:

17 You must bring bread set aside for this purpose; it must be **from** the land **in which you dwell**—not from outside the Land of Israel. It must consist of **two loaves** made from **two-tenths** of an *ephah*—one-tenth of an *ephah* for each loaf;¹⁵¹ **they must be of fine flour**, and **they must be baked leavened**. This will be **the first grain-offering** of *wheat* that will be brought **to God** from the new grain harvest, only after which you may begin to bring other grain-offerings from the new harvest.

You will see later that besides the *omer* of barley brought on the second day of Pass-over, there is one other type of barley grain-offering: that brought by a suspected adulteress.¹⁵² If there is occasion to bring such a grain-offering between Passover and *Shavuot*, it, too, may not be brought from the new grain harvest until the two loaves of leavened wheat bread are offered up, despite the fact that a barley grain-offering from the new harvest—the *omer*—has already been offered up.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

excess could hardly be considered conducive to undertaking a process of spiritual growth.

However, they missed the entire point. The reason the Torah requires us to begin the counting of the *omer* after some other event or day, as explained above, is because we cannot accomplish this supernatural transformation of the human/animal soul solely with our own strengths; we need the added help of God's transcendence. Our own self-refinement is of no avail in eliciting this transcendent Divinity. The only way we can invoke God's supernatural aid is by transcending our own natural limitations—including those of our own intellect—i.e., through our supra-rational submission to God's will. On the contrary, our belief in the power of God's transcendence is expressed specifically by performing the seemingly impossible or irrational feat of infusing physical reality with Divine consciousness—as we do when we celebrate God's festivals through physical means.¹⁵⁵

You must count for yourselves: The lesson of "counting" and "polishing," the process of spiritual refinement and maturation, continues past *Shavuot* and applies the whole year round. We should always be counting; every day—even every hour—must be valued as an opportunity for further spiritual growth. At the end of each day, we should know what we accomplished that day and what still remains to be done.

Furthermore, when we count, the number always

arises: We must ensure that today is better than yesterday and that tomorrow will be even better than today.¹⁵⁶

16 You must count until the day after the seventh week, the fiftieth day: This phrase reads literally, "Until the day after the seventh week, you must count 50 days." Since, however, the preceding verse enjoins us to count "seven weeks," i.e., 49 days and no more, the oral tradition informs us that the words "50 days" in this verse can, in context, only mean "the fiftieth day," as reflected in our translation. And indeed, we only "count the *omer*" for 49 days.¹⁵⁷

Nevertheless, for the purpose of allegory, we can read these words literally. As we have seen,¹⁵⁸ there are 50 "gates" of understanding, i.e., 50 general levels of Divine consciousness that we can aspire to attain. These levels are termed "gates" because they are the entryways into different levels of our relationship with God. The first 49 gates are those we can reach through our own efforts, while the fiftieth is the crowning level bestowed upon us by God in recognition of our having successfully attained the first 49 on our own. The 49 days of "counting the *omer*" correspond to the first 49 gates; on each day of the count, we potentially reach a higher level of Divine consciousness. This is why we count a higher number every day, rather than counting down to the Giving of the Torah. *Shavuot*, the fiftieth day of the count, is when God gives us the fiftieth gate, in the form of the new revelation of the Torah we receive on this day.

¹⁵¹ Mishneh Torah, *Temidin uMusaḥafin* 8:6. ¹⁵² Numbers 5:15. ¹⁵³ Shulchan Aruch, *Orach Chaim* 529. ¹⁵⁴ Malachi 2:3. ¹⁵⁵ *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 27, p. 383 (*Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 2, p. 331). ¹⁵⁶ *HaYom Yom*, 1 Iyar. ¹⁵⁷ See *Tosefot on Menachot* 65b. ¹⁵⁸ "Inner Dimensions" on Genesis 6:15 and 18:1. See also "Inner Dimensions" on Deuteronomy 34:1.

— ONKELOS —
 18 ותקרבון על לחמא שבקא
 אמרין שלמין בני שגא ותור
 בר תורין חד ודברין תרין יהון
 עלתא קדם יי ומנחתהון ונסכיהון
 קרבן דמתקבל ברענא קדם יי:
 19 ותעבדון צפיר בר עזין חד
 לחטאתא ותרין אמרין בני שגא
 לנכסת קדשיא: 20 ויריס כהנא
 יתהון על לחם בבוריא ארמותא
 קדם יי על תרין אמרין קדשא יהון
 קדם יי לכהנא: 21 ותערעון בכרן
 יומא הדין מערע קדיש יהי לכון
 כל עבדת פלחן לא תעבדון קים
 עלם בכל מותבניכון לדריכון:

18 והקרבנתם על-הלחם שבעת כבשים תמימם בני
 שגא ופר בין-בקר אחד ואילים שנים יהיו עלה ליהוה
 ומנחתם ונסכיהם אשה ריח-ניחוח ליהוה: 19 ועשיתם
 שעיר-עזים אחד לחטאת ושני כבשים בני שגא לזבח
 שלמים: 20 והניף הכהן אתם על לחם הבכרים
 תנופה לפני יהוה על-שני כבשים קדש יהיו ליהוה
 לפה: 21 וקראתם בעצם היום הזה מקרא-קדש יהיה
 לכם כל-מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו חקת עולם בכל-
 מושבותיכם לדורותיכם:

— RASHI —

והשעיר האמורים בחמש הפקודים? כשאתה מגיע
 אצל פרים ואילים, אינן הם, אמר מעתה: אלו
 לעצמן ואלו לעצמן, אלו קרבו בגלל הלחם ואלו
 למוספין: 20 והניף הכהן אתם תנופה. מלמד שטעונין
 תנופה מחיים, יכול כלם? תלמוד לומר: "על שני
 כבשים": קדש יהיו. לפי ששלמי יחיד קדשים קלים,
 הזקק לומר בשלמי צבור, שהן קדשי קדשים:

18 על הלחם. בגלל הלחם, חובה ללחם: ומנחתם
 ונסכיהם. כמשפט מנחה ונסכים המפרשים בכל בהמה
 בפרשת נסכים: "שלשה עשרונים לפר ושני עשרונים
 לאיל ועשרון לכבש, זו היא המנחה, והנסכים:
 "חצי ההין לפר ושלישית ההין לאיל ורביעית
 ההין לכבש": 19 ועשיתם שעיר עזים. יכול שבעת
 הכבשים והשעיר האמורים כאן, הם שבעת הכבשים

41. במדבר טו, די.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

ox,"¹⁷⁰ we can fulfill our Divine mission much more
 effectively when we harness the powerful drives of
 our "inner ox," our human/animal soul, to the task.
 Yet again, according to this explanation, it would
 seem that unleavened bread should remain forbid-
 den until *Shavuot* rather than just during Passover,
 the first seven days of the process. Indeed, we have
 seen¹⁷¹ that the use of the new crop of wheat for
 grain-offerings in the Temple is prohibited until
Shavuot. Inasmuch as the barley offering brought on
 the second day of Passover signifies the refinement
 of the human/animal soul (since barley is primar-
 ily used as animal food, as was mentioned above¹⁷²),
 the wheat offering brought on *Shavuot* signifies by
 contrast the revelation of the Divine soul (since
 wheat is used primarily as human food, and we ful-
 fill our "human" potential by virtue of our Divine
 souls). The prohibition of wheat until *Shavuot* would
 thus reinforce the notion that until then we have not
 made the transition from animal/human to Divine
 consciousness, and are therefore not sufficiently

mature to make proper use of ego/*chametz*.

The answer is that the first of our emotions, *chesed*,
 encapsulates within it all seven.¹⁷³ All emotions are
 variations on love—even hatred, which appears to
 be the opposite of love, since we only hate people
 or things that mean something to us. Thus, once we
 have refined the *chesed* of the human/animal soul,
 we have in a sense rectified all its emotions, and we
 may therefore begin to make use of the ego in ful-
 filling our Divine mission.¹⁷⁴

**21 You must designate this very day as a holy occa-
 sion...you must not perform any mundane work:**

While both Passover and *Sukot* are celebrated for
 an entire week, *Shavuot* lasts only one day.¹⁷⁵ This
 is because *Shavuot* is the annual reliving of the rev-
 elation that took place when the Torah was given
 on Mount Sinai. This experience of God's infinite
 essence transcends the limitations of time; we there-
 fore do not require a full week to assimilate it into
 the complete array of our emotions.¹⁷⁶

170. Proverbs 14:4. 171. Vv. 14-17. 172. On v. 15. 173. Etz Chaim 25:2, etc. 174. Likutei Torah 2:36a-37a; Likutei Sichot, vol. 1, pp. 265-269; vol. 7, p. 196; vol. 22, pp. 31-32. 175. In the Diaspora, one extra day is added to each. 176. Sichot Kodesh 5721, p. 188.

18 Along with the bread, and independent of the additional offerings for *Shavuot*,¹⁶⁶ **you must bring seven unblemished lambs in their first year, one young bull, and two rams. These must be ascent-offerings to God**, and must be accompanied by **their** requisite **grain-offering and libations**—three-tenths of an *ephah* of flour and half a *hin* of wine per bull, two-tenths of an *ephah* of flour and a third of a *hin* of wine per ram, and one-tenth of an *ephah* of flour and a quarter of a *hin* of wine per lamb.¹⁶⁷ They must be offered up with the intention that they be **fire-offerings** and that they be **pleasing to God**.

19 Also accompanying the two loaves, **you must offer up one he-goat as a sin-offering and two lambs in their first year as a peace-offering**. These lambs are the only instance of a communal peace-offering.

20 The priest must wave some of **those** animals that must be brought **together with the first-offering bread**, before they are slaughtered, **as a live wave-offering before God**—specifically, **the two lambs** brought as a peace-offering.

Inasmuch as these two lambs are communal peace-offerings, **they will be more holy to God** than personal peace-offerings: personal peace-offerings are sacrifices of lesser holiness, whereas these will be sacrifices of superior holiness. As such, the parts of these peace-offerings that would be given to the owners if they were personal peace-offerings may in this case be eaten only **by the officiating priest** and other male priests qualified to eat them.¹⁶⁸

	Ascent-Offerings			Sin-Offering	Peace-Offering
	Bulls	Rams	Sheep	Goat	Sheep
Additional Offerings of Shavuot	2	1	7	1	
Offerings Brought with the Two Loaves	1	2	7	1	2

Figure 3. Comparison between the Additional Offerings of *Shavuot* and the Offerings brought on *Shavuot* together with the Two Loaves.

21 You must designate this very day as a holy occasion that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers,¹⁶⁹ **which you must celebrate** as the festival of *Shavuot*; **you must not perform any mundane work** on it, even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss. This is **an eternal rule in all your dwelling places and throughout all your generations**.

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

In order to ensure that it is our Divine ego—our Divine soul—that will assert itself, rather than our materialistic human/animal soul, we have to first eschew leavening totally. By undergoing an intense period of self-abnegation at the beginning of our annual spiritual renewal, our Divine soul is empowered to assume the dominant role in our daily consciousness. This is why leavening is forbidden on Passover. The spiritualization and

maturation of our human/animal soul then accomplished by the *omer* offering and the counting of the *omer* allows us to assert ourselves—to consume *chametz*—safely. Indeed, once we are ready, the self-assertion signified by *chametz* is not only permitted but mandatory, since we are intended not only to subdue and refine the human/animal soul but conscript it for our Divine mission. Just as “more produce can be produced when using the power of an

166. Numbers 28:26-31. 167. Ibid. 15:1-12. 168. *Sifra* on 7:6, above, quoted by Rashi *ad loc*. 169. Rashi on v. 35, below.

— ONKELOS —

22 ובמחצדכון ית חצדא דארעכון לא תשיצי פאתא דחקלך במחצדך ולקטא דחקלך לא תלקט לעניי ולגיורי תשובוק יתהון אנא יי אלהכון: 23 ומליל יי עם משה למימר: 24 מלל עם בני ישראל למימר בירחא שביעאה בחד לירחא יהי לכוני ניהא דכרן יבבא מערע קדיש: 25 כל עבדית פלחון לא תעבדון ותקרבוני קרבנא קדם יי: 26 ומליל יי עם משה למימר: 27 ברם בעשרא לירחא שביעאה הדין יומא דכפוריא הוא מערע קדיש יהי לכוני ותענוני ית נפשיתכון ותקרבוני קרבנא קדם יי:

22 וּבְקִצְרְכֶם אֶת־קִצִּיר אֲרֻצְכֶם לֹא־תִבְלֶה פֶּאת שְׂדֶךְ בְּקִצְרְךָ וּלְקַט קִצִּירְךָ לֹא תִלְקַט לְעָנִי וּלְגֵר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: פ

◆ חמישי 23 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 24 דְּבַר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן וּכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ: 25 כָּל־מִלְאכַת עֲבָדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה: ס
26 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 27 אַךְ בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הוּא מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת־נַפְשֵׁיכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה:

— RASHI —

מהם: אני ה' אלהיכם. נאמן לשלם שקר: 24 וּכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה. וּכְרוֹן פְּסוּקֵי וּכְרוֹנוֹת וּפְסוּקֵי שׁוֹפְרוֹת, לְזִכָּר לָכֶם עֲקֹרֶת יִצְחָק, שֶׁקָּרַב תַּחֲתֵיוֹ אֵל: 25 וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה. הַמוֹסָפִין הָאֲמֹרִין בְּחֹמֶשׁ הַפְּקוּדִים: 27 אַךְ. כָּל "אֲכִין" וְ"רָקִין" שֶׁבַתוֹרָה מְעוּטִין, מִכֹּפֶר הוּא לְשָׁבִים וְאֵינוֹ מִכֹּפֶר עַל שְׂאִינָם שָׁבִים:

22 וּבְקִצְרְכֶם. חֹזֵר וְשֹׁנֵה, לַעֲבֹר עֲלֵיהֶם בְּשָׁנֵי לְאוּיָן. אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָרְהָמָה בְּרַבִּי יוֹסִי: מָה רָאָה הַכָּתוּב לַתְּנָה בְּאַמְצַע הָרִגְלִים, פֶּסַח וְעֶצֶרֶת מִכָּאן, וְרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים וְחַג מִכָּאן, לְלַמֶּדֶךָ, שֶׁכָּל הַנוֹתֵן לְקַט שִׁכְחָה וּפָאָה לְעָנִי כְּרֹאזִי, מַעֲלִין עָלָיו כָּאֵלוֹ בָּנָה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְהִקְרִיב עָלָיו קֶרֶבֶתוֹתָיו בְּתוֹכוֹ: תַּעֲזֹב. הִנֵּחַ לַפְּנִיָּהם וְהֵם לִקְטוֹ, וְאֵין לָהּ לְסִיעַ לְאַחַד

incur irretrievable loss, and you must offer up a fire-offering to God on this day, as will be described later.”¹⁹⁰

26 God spoke to Moses, saying:

27 “Although, as you have been taught,¹⁹¹ you must celebrate the tenth of this seventh month, Tishrei, as a Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*), the day effects atonement only for those who have repented of their misdeeds. You must celebrate this day as a holy occasion marked by wearing fine clothes and reciting appropriate prayers. You must afflict yourselves by abstaining from food and drink, anointing, bathing, wearing leather shoes, and marital relations,¹⁹² and you must offer up a fire-offering to God, as will be described later.¹⁹³

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

24 Remembrance of the shofar blast: The sounding of the shofar on the first day of the year elicits the new, particular influx of Divine energy that will sustain all creation, spiritual and physical, for that year. However, when *Rosh HaShanah* coincides with the Sabbath, the shofar is not sounded,¹⁹⁴ it is only “remembered.”

The reason for this is because on the Sabbath,

blowing the shofar is not only superfluous but pointless. As we will see,¹⁹⁵ God’s sovereignty over us is the theme of *Rosh HaShanah*. Sounding the shofar at God’s “coronation” is our declaration of our renewed selfless, voluntary submission to God’s sovereignty on this day. The need for such a declaration, however, implies that we are conscious of ourselves as independent beings who must submit

190. Numbers 29:1-6. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 338, note 36. 191. Above, 16:1-34. 192. *Yoma* 8:1. 193. Numbers 29:7-11. 194. See *Rosh HaShanah* 4:1-2. 195. Numbers 10:10.

Fallen Gleanings, continued

22 As you have been taught,¹⁷⁷ **when you reap the harvest of your land, you must not fully reap the last corner of your field during your harvesting, nor may you gather up the one- or two-ear gleanings of your harvest** that fall from your hand while you are reaping your field. **Rather, you must leave these for the poor person and for the convert,** the latter because he has no land-inheritance which to farm. You must relinquish these leavings to the poor and the convert absolutely: you may not even selectively help some of these people gather them, for that would imply that you retain some rights over these leavings.¹⁷⁸ **I am God, your God,** who may be relied upon to reward you for fulfilling this obligation.

I am repeating these prohibitions in order to make you liable to two rounds of lashes if you transgress them (as opposed to the prohibitions of gleaning the young and fallen grapes of the vineyard, for which you are liable to only one round of lashes). I am articulating this repetition here, in the middle of the laws regarding the sacrifices unique to each festival, in order to compare these leavings to sacrifices: in both cases, you completely surrender a portion of your hard-earned wealth for My purposes. For this reason, if you leave over these leavings as required, I will credit you as if you had labored to build the Temple and offered up in it all the sacrifices required of you. (This equivalence applies as well to the harvest sheaves that you forget to gather, which you will later be commanded to also leave over for the poor.¹⁷⁹ It does not apply, however, to the gleanings of young and fallen grapes,¹⁸⁰ because grapes are not as vital to sustenance as is grain and because less labor is required to grow grapes than is required to grow grain.)’¹⁸¹

The Festivals, continued

◆ *Fifth Reading 23* God spoke to Moses, saying,

24 **“Speak to the Israelites, saying: ‘You must celebrate the first day of Tishrei, the seventh month, as a day of rest.** As you know, even though the months have been counted from Nisan ever since the Exodus,¹⁸² the years are still counted from Tishrei,¹⁸³ as they have been ever since Adam was created on this day.¹⁸⁴ This holiday will therefore be known as *Rosh HaShanah* (“Head of the Year”). Inasmuch as the new year begins on this day, it is a day of judgment, on which I will predetermine the events of the upcoming year.¹⁸⁵ Therefore, in your prayers to Me on this day, you must recite verses from the Torah that mention My **remembrance** of Israel and **of the shofar blast**¹⁸⁶ required to be sounded on this day.¹⁸⁷ This will recall the merit of your forefather Isaac’s willingness to sacrifice himself and how a ram — recalled by the ram’s horn you sound — was offered up in his stead.¹⁸⁸

You must celebrate this day as a **holy occasion** that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers.¹⁸⁹

25 **You must not perform any mundane work** on this day, even if you will thereby

177. Above, 19:9. 178. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, pp. 262-263. 179. Deuteronomy 24:19. 180. Above, 19:10. 181. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, pp. 255-262. 182. Exodus 12:2. 183. See on Exodus 12:2. 184. Genesis 1:16; “Background” to Genesis 1:1. 185. *Rosh HaShanah* 8a. 186. See also Numbers 10:10. 187. Numbers 29:1. 188. Genesis 22:1-18, particularly v. 14; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 12, pp. 103-107, vol. 13, p. 28, note 20. 189. Rashi on v. 35, below.

— ONKELOS —

28 וְכָל עֲבִידָא לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן בְּכֹרן יוֹמָא הָדִין אַרִי יוֹמָא דְכַפּוּרִיא הוּא לְכַפֵּרָא עֲלֵיכוֹן קָדָם יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ: 29 אַרִי כָל אֲנָשָׁא דִּי לֹא יִתְעַנֵּי בְּכֹרן יוֹמָא הָדִין וְיִשְׁתַּיְצִי מַעֲמָה: 30 וְכָל אֲנָשׁ דִּי יַעֲבֹד כָּל עֲבִידָא בְּכֹרן יוֹמָא הָדִין וְאוּבֹד יֵת אֲנָשָׁא הַהוּא מְגוּ עֲמָה: 31 כָּל עֲבִידָא לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן קָדָם עֲלָם לְדִרְיֹכוֹן בְּכָל מוֹתְבִיכוֹן: 32 שַׁבַּת שְׁבֻתָּא הוּא לְכוֹן וְתַעֲנוּן יֵת נַפְשְׁכוֹן בְּתַשְׁעָה לִירְחָא בְּרַמְשָׁא מְרַמְשָׁא עַד רַמְשָׁא תְנוּחוֹן נִיחֻכוֹן: 33 וּמְלִיל יְיָ עִם מֹשֶׁה לְמִימֵר: 34 מְלִל עִם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִימֵר בְּחֻמְשַׁת עֶשְׂרָא יוֹמָא לִירְחָא שְׁבִיעָאָה הָדִין חֲמָא דְמַטְלִיא שְׁבַעַת יוֹמִין קָדָם יְיָ: 35 בְּיוֹמָא קְדָמָאָה מְעָרַע קְדִישׁ כָּל עֲבִידֵי פִלְחָן לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן: 36 שְׁבַעַת יוֹמִין תִּקְרְבוּן אֲרָבָנָא קָדָם יְיָ בְּיוֹמָא תְּמִינָאָה מְעָרַע קְדִישׁ יְהִי לְכוֹן וְתִקְרְבוּן אֲרָבָנָא קָדָם יְיָ בְּנִישִׁין תְּהוֹן כָּל עֲבִידֵי פִלְחָן לֹא תַעֲבִדוּן:

28 וְכָל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי יוֹם כַּפָּרִים הוּא לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: 29 כִּי כָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִעֲנֶה בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְנִכְרְתָה מֵעַמִּיהָ: 30 וְכָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלָאכָה בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְהֶאֱבַדְתִּי אֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִקֶּרֶב עַמִּיהָ: 31 כָּל־מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם: 32 שַׁבַּת שְׁבֻתוֹן הוּא לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת־נַפְשֵׁיכֶם בְּתַשְׁעָה לַחֹדֶשׁ בָּעֶרֶב מֵעֶרֶב עַד־עֶרֶב תִּשְׁבֹּתוּ שְׁבֻתְכֶם: פ

◆ שְׁשִׁי 33 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: 34 דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים לַיהוָה: 35 בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ כָּל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: 36 שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּקְרְבוּ אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה עֲצֶרֶת הוּא כָּל־מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

— RASHI —

הוא. עֲצֶרֶת אֶתְכֶם אֲצִלִּי, כְּמִלָּךְ שׁוֹמֵן אֶת בְּנֵי לְסַעוּדָה לְכָךְ וְכָךְ יָמִים, בֵּין שְׁהִיגַע וּמִן לְהַפְסֵר, אָמַר: בְּנֵי, בְּבִקְשָׁה מִכֶּם, עֲכָבוּ עִמִּי עוֹד יוֹם אֶחָד, קִשָּׁה עָלֵי פְרֻדְתְּכֶם: כָּל מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה. אֲפֹלוּ מְלָאכָה שְׁהִיא עֲבֹדָה לָכֶם, שֶׁאֵם לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה יֵשׁ חֶסֶד כִּס בְּדָבָר: לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה. יָכוֹל אֵף חֲלוּ שֶׁל מוֹעֵד יֵהָא אֶסוּר בְּמְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה, תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר: "הוּא":

30 והאֲבַדְתִּי. לִפִּי שְׁהוּא אוֹמֵר בְּרַת בְּכָל מְקוֹם וְאֵינִי יוֹדֵעַ מַה הוּא, כְּשְׁהוּא אוֹמֵר "וְהֶאֱבַדְתִּי", לְמַד עַל הַפֶּרֶת שְׁאִינוּ אֵלָּא אֲבָדוֹן: 31 כָּל מְלָאכָה וְגו'. לְעֵבֶר עָלָיו בְּלֹאִין הַרְבֵּה, אוֹ לְהוֹדִיר עַל מְלָאכָת לִילָה כְּמְלָאכָת יוֹם: 35 מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ. בַּיּוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים קֹדֶשׁ הוּא בְּכֻסּוֹת נִקְיָה וּבְתַפְלָה, וּבְשָׁאָר יָמִים טוֹבִים — בְּמִאֲכָל וּבְמִשְׁתֶּה וּבְכֻסּוֹת נִקְיָה וּבְתַפְלָה: 36 עֲצֶרֶת

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

of Glory that encircled the people on their desert trek from Egypt to the Land of Israel, as we will see.²⁰³ In contrast, the holidays of *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur* are not associated with the agricultural cycle, nor do they explicitly recall the Exodus from Egypt. Thus, we have, in this section of the Torah, two apparently independent sets of holidays: the pilgrim festivals and the "high" holidays. Nonetheless, the fact that *Sukot* (and its adjunct holiday, *Shemini Atzeret*) is observed almost immediately after the holidays of *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom*

Kippur naturally associates it with them, and thus, besides its agricultural and historical significance, *Sukot* possesses a third level of significance, as the conclusion of the "high holiday" period of the month of Tishrei.

In this context, we are taught that on *Sukot* and *Shemini Atzeret*, like on *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*, we are meant to renew and revitalize our relationship with God as our king, thereby eliciting the new and enhanced influx of Divine life-force particular to the new year. The difference between

203. Below, v. 43.

28 You must not perform any work on this day itself, even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss, **for it is a Day of Atonement reserved for effecting atonement for you before God, your God.**

29 The observance of this day is so serious **that any person who intentionally neglects to be afflicted** in the above-mentioned ways **on this day itself will be cut off from his people**—he will die prematurely and childless.

30 Similarly, regarding **any person who performs any work on this day itself, I will cause that person to be lost from among his people** by making him die prematurely and childless.

31 I will repeat these prohibitions in order to make the person who transgresses them liable for multiple punishments: **You must not perform any work** on this day. This is **an eternal rule**, which will apply **throughout your generations and in all your dwelling places.**

32 It must be a complete day of rest for you, and you must afflict yourselves as stated. **You must observe your day of rest beginning on the ninth of the month of Tishrei in the evening, from that evening to the next evening."**

◆ *Sixth Reading* **33 God spoke to Moses, saying,**

34 "Speak to the Israelites, saying: 'On the 15th day of this seventh month, Tishrei, is the Festival of Sukot, a seven-day period devoted to God.

35 The first day of these seven is a holy occasion that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers,¹⁹⁶ and on which **you must not perform any mundane work**, even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss.

36 For a seven-day period, you must bring each day a fire-offering to God, as will be described later.¹⁹⁷ **You must celebrate the eighth day**—the day after *Sukot*—**as a holy occasion** that you must honor with fine clothes, special food, and appropriate prayers,¹⁹⁸ **and you must bring a separate fire-offering to God** on that day, as well.¹⁹⁹ As will be explained later in greater detail,²⁰⁰ **it is a day of restriction**, resulting from My desire to keep you in My company, so to speak, for an additional day after *Sukot*. This holiday will therefore be known as *Shemini Atzeret* ("The Eighth[-Day] Restriction"). **You must not perform any mundane work** on it, even if you will thereby incur irretrievable loss. On the intervening days of *Sukot*, however, you may perform mundane work if you would incur irretrievable loss by refraining from doing so.

— ❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧ —

to God intentionally. Such self-awareness characterizes our consciousness on weekdays. On the Sabbath, in contrast, when we are inherently absorbed into our heightened Divine consciousness, such a declaration is redundant.²⁰¹

34 The Festival of Sukot: As we have mentioned,²⁰² the timing of *Sukot* coincides with the ingathering of the harvest, after the produce harvested since

Passover has dried in the fields under the summer sun. In this context, it is one of the three pilgrim festivals that serve as occasions to praise God for our agricultural sustenance. The three pilgrim festivals also commemorate the Exodus from Egypt: Passover and *Shavuot* occur on the historical dates of the Exodus and its culmination, the Giving of the Torah; while *Sukot* commemorates the Clouds

¹⁹⁶. Rashi on v. 35, above. ¹⁹⁷. Numbers 29:12-34. ¹⁹⁸. Rashi on v. 35, above. ¹⁹⁹. Numbers 29:36-38. ²⁰⁰. Ibid. 29:35. ²⁰¹. *Sefer HaSichot* 5749, vol. 2, pp. 705-707. ²⁰². On v. 4, above.

— ONKELOS —

37 אליו מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה די תַּעֲרֶעוּן יתְהוּן מְעֲרֵי קִדִּישׁ לְקַרְבָּא קֶרֶבָּא קָדָם יי עֲלֵתָא וּמִנְחָתָא נִכְסֵת קִדְשִׁין וְנִסּוּכִין פְּתֻגָּם יוֹם בְּיוֹמָה: 38 בַּר מִשְׁבִּיא דִּי וְבַר מִמְתַּנְתִּיכוֹן וְבַר מִכָּל נִדְרִיכוֹן וְבַר מִכָּל גְּדִבְתִּכוֹן דִּי תִתְנֹן קָדָם יי: 39 בְּרָם בְּחֻמְשַׁת עֶשֶׂר יוֹמָא לִירְחָא שְׁבִיעֵאָה בְּמִכְנָשִׁיכוֹן ית עֲלֵלָת אֶרְעָא תִּתְחַגּוּן ית חֲגָא קָדָם יי שְׁבַעַא יוֹמִין בְּיוֹמָא קִדְמָאָה גִּיחָא וּבְיוֹמָא תְּמִינָאָה גִּיחָא: 40 וְתִסְבּוֹן לְכוֹן בְּיוֹמָא קִדְמָאָה פְּרִי אֵילָנָא אֶתְרוּגִין וְלֹלֶבִין וְהִדְסִין וְעֶרְבִין דְּנִחַל וְתַחֲדָן קָדָם יי אֶלְהִיכוֹן שְׁבַעַא יוֹמִין:

37 אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם מִקְרָאֵי קִדִּישׁ לַהֲקָרִיב אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה עֲלֶה וּמִנְחָה זֶבַח וְנִסָּכִים דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ: 38 מִלֶּבֶד שַׁבָּתַת יְהוָה וּמִלֶּבֶד מִתְּנוּתֵיכֶם וּמִלֶּבֶד כָּל־נִדְרֵיכֶם וּמִלֶּבֶד כָּל־גְּדִבְתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לַיהוָה: 39 אֵךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַסְפְּכֶם אֶת־תְּבוּאֹת הָאָרֶץ תִּחְגּוּ אֶת־חַג־יְהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן שַׁבָּתוֹן וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי שַׁבָּתוֹן: 40 וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ־עָבֹת וְעֶרְבֵי־נָחַל וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם שִׁבְעַת יָמִים:

— RASHI —

שְׁבַעַת יָמִים. אִם לֹא הִבִּיא בְּזָה — יְבִיא בְּזָה. יָכוֹל יֵהָא מְבִיאָן כָּל שְׁבַעָה, תִּלְמוֹד לומר: "וְחִגְּתֶם אֹתוֹ," יוֹם אֶחָד בְּמִשְׁמַע וְלֹא יוֹתֵר, וְלָמָּה נֶאֱמַר "שְׁבַעָה"? לְתַשְׁלוּמִין: 40 פְּרִי עֵץ הָדָר. עַץ שְׁטַעַם עֲצוֹ וּפְרִיו שָׂוֶה: הָדָר. הָדָר בְּאֵילָנוֹ מִשְׁנָה לְשָׁנָה, וְזוֹהוּ אֶתְרוּגָּה: כַּפֹּת תְּמָרִים. חֹסֶר וי"ו, לְמִדָּ שְׂאִינָה אֵלָּא אֶחָת: וְעֵנָף עֵץ עָבֹת. שְׁעֲנָפָיו קְלוּעִים כְּעֹבוֹתוֹת וְכַחֲבָלִים, וְזוֹהוּ הִדָּס הַעֲשׂוֹי כְּמִין קְלִיעָה:

37 עֲלֵה וּמִנְחָה. מִנְחָת נִסָּכִים הִקְרָבָה עִם הָעוֹלָה: דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ. חֹק הַקְּצוּב בְּחֻמְשׁ הַפְּקוּדִים: דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ. הָא אִם עֶבֶר יוֹמוֹ — בְּטֵל קֶרֶבָּנוֹ: 39 אֵךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם תִּחְגּוּ. קֶרֶבֶן שְׁלָמִים לַחֲגִיגָה. יָכוֹל תִּדְּחָה אֵת הַשַּׁבָּת? תִּלְמוֹד לומר: "אֵךְ," הוֹאִיל וַיֵּשׁ לָהּ תַּשְׁלוּמִין כָּל שְׁבַעָה: בְּאַסְפְּכֶם אֶת תְּבוּאֹת הָאָרֶץ. שְׂוִיָּהא חֹדֶשׁ שְׁבִיעִי זֶה בָּא בְּזִמְן אֲסִיפָה, מִכָּאן שְׁנַצְטוּ לְעֶבֶר אֵת הַשָּׁנִים, שְׂאֵם אֵין הָעֶבֶר — פְּעָמִים שְׂדוּאָ בְּאַמְצַע הַקִּיץ אוֹ הַחֹרֶף: תִּחְגּוּ. שְׁלָמִי חֲגִיגָה:

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

the first two and last two holidays is that whereas during the former, we focus on God in ways that engender awe of Him—for which reason these days are known colloquially as the "Days of Awe"—during the latter, we focus on Him in ways that engender love of Him. Thus, what we accomplish on *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur* through earnest, extended prayer and introspective contrition is accomplished on *Sukot* and *Shemini Atzeret* through joy. In particular, the spiritual growth that occurs in the inner recesses of our heart or in the inner chambers of the Temple during the Days of Awe is revealed openly during the *Sukot* and *Shemini Atzeret*. This process is alluded to in the verse, "Blow the shofar on the new moon [of Tishrei], on [the day of] concealment, [so that its effect may be revealed] on the day of our festival [*Sukot*]." ²⁰⁷

The observances of *Sukot*, therefore, mirror the distinctive observances of the Days of Awe:

- The central observance of *Rosh HaShanah* is the

blowing of the shofar. Traditionally, the procedure of blowing the shofar consists of 100 blasts: 60 long blasts (*teki'ot*), 20 wailing blasts (*shevarim*), and 20 staccato blasts (*teruot*).²⁰⁸ These numbers are identical to the numerical values of the letters that make up the word for the "thatching" (סכך) used to cover the *sukah*: 60, 20, and 20.²⁰⁹

- The seven days between *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur* correspond to the seven days of *Sukot*.
- The climax of the *Yom Kippur* rites in the Temple was the incense offering, which produced a cloud of smoke in the Holy of Holies. The facets of Divine revelation embodied in this cloud of smoke are the same as those manifest in the thatching of the *sukah*, as we will explain presently.²¹⁰

40 You must take hold of these four plant-parts: The Midrash notes that these four plant-parts differ with regard to their taste and smell. It then notes that taste and fragrance are apt metaphors for

207. Psalms 81:4. 208. Magen Avraham on Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 596 §1; Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Orach Chaim 596:1. 209. Cf. Pri Eitz Chaim, end of Sha'ar HaSukot; Torat Levi Yitzchak, p. 303. 210. On v. 42, below. Likutei Sichot, vol. 2, p. 425; Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat, vol. 1, pp. 176-177, 246-248, 357.

37 The above are God's appointed holy days that you must designate as holy occasions, on which to offer up fire-offerings to God as listed here (regarding the sacrifices accompanying the two loaves of bread on *Shavuot*) and as will be listed later (when the prescribed additional offerings for the holidays will be detailed)—i.e., **ascent-offerings** and their accompanying **grain-offerings**, which are burned up on the Altar in their entirety, **feast-offerings**, which are burned up partially on the Altar—as well as wine **libations**, which are only poured onto the Altar. Regarding these sacrifices, you must offer up **each day's requirement on its prescribed day**; once the day has passed, you may not make them up later.

38 The obligation to offer up these holiday sacrifices stands apart from the sacrifices you are required to offer up on God's Sabbaths, and apart from your sacrificial gifts, all your sacrificial vows, and all your sacrificial dedications that you must give to God if you have obligated yourselves to do so.

39 In contrast to the above-mentioned sacrifices, which may be offered up only on their prescribed days, **you must also offer up a festival peace-offering to God on the 15th day of the seventh month**—which must always occur in the time of year **when you gather in the produce of the land**—but if the 15th falls on the Sabbath, or you cannot offer up this festival-offering for some other reason, you have the whole **seven-day period** of *Sukot* in which to offer it up. You must also offer up a festival peace-offering on the first day of Passover and on *Shavuot*;²⁰⁴ in these cases, too, if these days fall on the Sabbath or you cannot offer up this offering for some other reason, you may do so during the ensuing six days.

As just stated, the month of Tishrei must always fall in the season of the ingathering of the harvest; this is another reason why the court must intercalate a month into the calendar from time to time.²⁰⁵

As stated above, **the first day of Sukot must be a day of rest and the eighth day—i.e., Shemini Atzeret—must be a day of rest.**

40 On the first day of Sukot, each of you must, for a moment, take hold for yourselves of the following four plant-parts, together: (a) one **fruit of the citron tree**, the flavor of whose fruit can be tasted in its bark, and whose fruit takes more than a year to ripen and therefore **stays** on the tree more than one year; (b) one **date-palm frond**; (c) at least²⁰⁶ three **branches of a myrtle bush**, whose overlapping leaves make its branches look **braided**; and (d) **two branches of the type of willow tree that typically grows next to a brook** (see Figure 4). Beginning on the first day of *Sukot*, **you must rejoice before God, your God, for the full seven-day period** of the holiday.

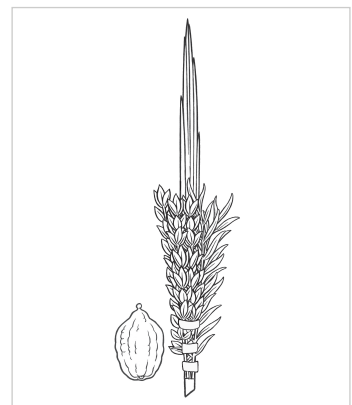


Figure 4. The Four Plant-Parts

204. Deuteronomy 16:16-17. 205. See above, v. 2; Deuteronomy 16:1. 206. *Mishneh Torah*, *Lulav* 7:7; *Shulchan Aruch* 1:651.

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41 וְתַחֲנוּן יְתֵה חֲנָא קָדָם יי
שְׁבַע יוֹמִין בְּשֵׁתָא קִים עֲלֵם
לְדַרְיֹכוֹ בִּירְחָא שְׁבִיעָא תַחֲנוּן
יְתֵה: 42 בְּמַטְלִיא תִּתְּבוֹן שְׁבַע
יוֹמִין כָּל יְצִיבָא בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְּבוֹן
בְּמַטְלִיא: 43 בְּדִיל דִּידְעוֹן דְּרִיכוֹ
אֲרִי בְּמַטְלִיּוֹת עֲנְנֵי אוֹתִיבִית יֵת בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאַפְקוֹתֵי יְתַחוּן מֵאַרְעָא
דְּמִצְרַיִם אָנָּא יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: 44
וּמְלִיל מֹשֶׁה יֵת סֹדֵר מוֹעֲדֵי דִי
אֶלְפִינוֹן לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 24 וּמְלִיל

41 וְתַחֲנוּן אֶתְּוּ חָג לִיהוָה שְׁבַע יָמִים בְּשָׁנָה חֶקֶת עוֹלָם
לְדַרְיֹכְכֶם בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי תַחֲנוּ אִתּוֹ: 42 בְּסֶפֶת תִּשְׁבּוּ
שְׁבַע יָמִים כָּל־הָאֶזְרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבּוּ בְּסֶפֶת: 43 לְמַעַן
יֵדְעוּ דַּרְיֹכְכֶם כִּי בְּסִפּוֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אָנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:
44 וַיִּדְבֹּר מֹשֶׁה אֶת־מַעְדֵי יְהוָה אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ

RASHI

42 הָאֶזְרָח. זֶה אֶזְרָח: בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. לְרַבּוֹת אֶת הַגָּרִים: 43 כִּי בְּסִפּוֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי. עֲנְנֵי כְבוֹד:

CHASIDIC INSIGHTS

person's essential connection to God is manifest. Although every one of us has this connection to God, it is often obscured by our active intellect and emotions.

Because the willow reflects the unadorned essence of the soul, its expression of unity surpasses that of the other four kinds. Whereas the other kinds embody a self-contained unity—the leaves of each palm frond, for example, are tied and united, but one palm frond does not unite with another—the unity of the willow is expressed in the fact that it grows closely together with other willows.²¹⁷

Next to a brook: The Torah's use of the term "brook" in describing the willow is not meant to exclude willows that grow in a field;²¹⁸ the Torah simply describes where willows are commonly found.²¹⁹ In contrast, the descriptions of the other three types of plant-parts are exclusionary. For example, the Torah's description of the citron as "beautiful" (the literal meaning of the word for "stays," *הדר*) excludes the use of a dried out citron.²²⁰

This distinction reflects the essential virtue of the willow-person, the one who excels neither in the study of the Torah nor the observance of the commandments. The other kinds of Jews are judged by whether they actualize their respective potentials, whether they fit the description given of them by the Torah. The willow-person, in contrast, is judged only by the essence of his soul. The Hebrew word

for "willow" (*ערבה*) also means "sweet," alluding to the fact that even if a Jew is far from the "brook"—the stream of living waters of the heritage of his ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the essence of his soul is always intact, and he must therefore be sought after and included in the union of our people.²²¹

Thus, peace and unity are the dominant theme of the commandment to hold the four plant-parts. As we will see,²²² they are the essence of the commandment to dwell in a *sukah*, as well.

Take hold for yourselves: Through fulfilling the commandment of holding the four plant-parts, we "take for ourselves"—i.e., internalize—the transcendent consciousness of the *sukah*. It is therefore customary that when we hold the four plant-parts together we bring them to our heart, so that this energy can be drawn into our hearts, from whence it can spread throughout our entire person.²²³

42 You must live in huts (*sukot*): The *sukah* is unique among the Torah's commandments in that it is the only one that we physically enter into; the *sukah* surrounds us on all sides. This property of the *sukah* is a physical manifestation of the Divine energy that the *sukah* embodies: God's transcendence. As mentioned above,²²⁴ the *sukah* derives spiritually from the cloud of incense produced by the high priest on *Yom Kippur*. Whereas the animal sacrifices focus primarily on refining our human/

A CLOSER LOOK

[43] **Clouds of Glory:** As has been mentioned,²²⁵ the clouds that surrounded the Israelites in the desert served two purposes: to protect them and to serve as an "honor guard" escorting them on their journey. The commandment to dwell in

huts on *Sukot* commemorates the second of these two purposes; this is why the Torah does not legislate any specific remembrance for the other two means by which God provided for the people's needs in the desert: the manna²²⁶ and the well.²²⁷

217. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 29, pp. 223-225. 218. *Sukah* 3:3. 219. Commentary of Rabbi Ovadia of Bartenura *ad loc.* 220. *Sukah* 29b. 221. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 22, pp. 132-135. 222. On v. 42, below. 223. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 24, p. 249. 224. On v. 34. 225. Exodus 13:21. 226. *Ibid.* 16:4-36. 227. *Ibid.* 17:1-7. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 18, p. 258.

41 You must celebrate the holiday of *Sukot* as a festival to God for seven days in the year. It is an eternal rule, applicable throughout your generations, that you celebrate it in the seventh month.

42 You must live in huts (*sukot*) throughout this same seven-day period. You must make the roof of these huts from cut vegetative matter.²¹¹ Every native Israelite as well as every convert among the Israelites must live in huts throughout this holiday

43 in order that your ensuing generations know that I figuratively had the Israelites live in “huts”—i.e., the Clouds of Glory—when I took them out of Egypt. I am God, your God, who may be relied upon to reward you for observing these commandments.”

44 Moses told the Israelites these laws of God’s appointed holy days.

❧ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ❧

contrasting the study of the Torah with the performance of God’s commandments and good deeds in general: Since the benefits of study are enjoyed chiefly by the student, it is represented by taste, inasmuch as taste can only be savored by the person eating the fruit. Since the benefits of good deeds are enjoyed by a wide group of people, it is represented by fragrance, inasmuch as fragrance can be smelled by anyone within a reasonable distance from the fruit.

Based on these associations, the Midrash identifies the four plant-parts as symbols of four types of people categorized according to their religious attainments:

- The citron, which tastes good and smells good, represents those who are rich both in knowledge of the Torah and in good deeds.
- The palm frond, whose fruit (the date) has no smell but tastes good, represents those who study the Torah but are lacking in good deeds.
- The myrtle, which smells good but has no taste, represents those rich in good deeds but deficient in the study of the Torah.
- The willow, which possesses neither a pleasant taste nor scent, represents those who lack both Torah knowledge and good deeds.

Of course, all Jews possess some knowledge of the Torah and are, in the words of the sages, “full of [the merits of fulfillment of God’s] commandments as a pomegranate [is full of seeds]”;²¹² the difference is only with regard to relative emphasis. Furthermore, inasmuch as the study of the Torah is an intellectual pursuit whereas the pursuit of good deeds reflects emotional commitment, these four categories can also represent the varying degrees of intellectual vs. emotional involvement in religious life:

- The citron represents those who are both intel-

lectually and emotionally involved.

- The palm frond represents those who are involved intellectually but not emotionally.
- The myrtle represents those who are involved emotionally but not intellectually.
- The willow represents those who are neither emotionally nor intellectually involved; their involvement is based solely on their innate faith in God and sense of self-discipline.

By bringing these four plants together, we unify of all the elements of our people. Moreover, each of the four plant-parts expresses unity on its own.²¹³

- The palm frond contains many leaves that grow close together.
- The citron, unlike most fruits, stays on the tree throughout all four seasons.
- Each of the myrtle’s sets of three leaves stem from the same point on the branch.
- Willow plants grow closely together. (The Aramaic word for “willow” [אחוינא]²¹⁴ is related to the Hebrew word for “brotherhood” [אחווה].)

The fruit of the citron tree: A prerequisite to unity is the absence of egotism. The person represented by the citron, excelling in both the study of the Torah and the observance of its commandments, is most susceptible to feelings of pride for his spiritual achievements. The Hebrew word for “citron” (אתרג) is therefore seen as an acronym for the phrase²¹⁵ “let not [even] the foot of pride come upon me” (אל תבואני רגל גאווה).²¹⁶

The willow: As just mentioned, the willow-Jew studies the Torah and observes its commandments on simple faith alone. In a sense, his observance is superior to the experience of the others, since it mirrors the simplicity of the essence of God. Without the interference of mind and heart, the simple

211. Rashi on Deuteronomy 16:13. 212. *Berachot* 57a, etc. 213. *Sidur im Dach* 264d. 214. *Shabbat* 20a. 215. Psalms 36:12. 216. Cf. *Panim Yafot; Likutei Sichot*, vol. 4, p. 1163.

— ONKELOS —
 יי עם משה למימר: 2 פקד ית
 בני ישראל ויסבון לך משח וזיתא
 דכיתא כתישא לאנהרא לאדלקא
 בוציניא תדירא: 3 מברא לפרכתא
 דסהדותא במשכן זמנא יסדר יתה
 אהרן מרמשא עד צפרא קדם יי
 תדירא קים עלם לדריכו: 4 על
 מנרתא דכיתא יסדר ית בוציניא
 קדם יי תדירא:

◆ שביעי 24:1 וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: 2 צו את-בני
 ישראל ויקחו אליך שמן זית גוד כתיית למאור להעלות
 נר תמיד: 3 מחוץ לפרכת העדת באהל מועד יערך
 אתו אהרן מערב עד-בקר לפני יהוה תמיד חקת עולם
 לדתיהם: 4 על המנרה המהרה יערך את-הנרות לפני
 יהוה תמיד: פ

— RASHI —
 באי עולם, שהשכינה שורה בישראל, שנותן בה
 שמן כמדת חבורתיה, וממנה היתה מתחיל ובה היתה
 מסים: יערך אתו אהרן מערב עד בקר. יערך אותו
 עריכה הראויה למדת כל הלילה, ושערו חכמים:
 חצי לג לכל נר נר, והן כדאי אף ללילי תקופת
 טבת, ומדה זו הקבעה להם: 4 המנרה הטהרה.
 שהיא זהב טהור. דבר אחר: על טהרה של מנורה,
 שמהרה ומדשנה תחלה מן האפר:

2 צו את בני ישראל. זו פרשת מצות הנרות, ופרשת
 "ואתה תצודה" לא נאמרה אלא על סדר מלאכת
 המשכן לפרש צרף המנורה, וכן משמע: ואתה סופך
 לצוות את בני ישראל על כך: שמן זית זה. שלשה
 שמנים יוצאים מן הזית: הראשון קרוי "זך", והן
 מפרשים במנחות⁴² ובתורת כהנים: תמיד. מלילה
 ללילה, כמו "עולת תמיד" שאינה אלא מיום ליום:
 3 לפרכת העדת. שלפני הארון שהוא קרוי "עדות".
 ורבותינו⁴³ דרשו על נר מערבי, שהוא עדות לכל

42. פט, א. 43. שבת כב, ב. 44. מנחות פט, א.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

You must live in huts (*sukot*): The requirement to "live" in *sukot* obligates us to "move into" it by placing our furniture and accessories in it and performing as many of our day-to-day activities in it as possible.²³⁵ Thus, unlike other commandments, which involve only a particular limb of the body, the *sukah* involves the whole person. During *Sukot*, even mundane, weekday eating becomes a the fulfillment of a commandment when performed in the *sukah*.

Furthermore, a home is a basic human need, secondary only to food and clothing.²³⁶ Even besides fulfilling the need for shelter, a home is a tangible expression of our mastery over the physical world; as such, it is a vital component of the fulfillment of our Divine mission—to make this world into God's home. Moreover, inasmuch as each of us is required to reveal Divinity in the world in a unique manner, as an expression of our unique Divine souls, a private home is an expression of the personal component of our Divine mission and an essential vehicle for our self-expression. Inasmuch as fulfilling this Divine imperative lies at the bedrock of our psychological makeup, the lack of a place to call home leaves us disoriented and unfocused. The sense of completeness we draw from our home is felt not only when

we are in it, but even when we are outside it.

So when, during *Sukot*, the *sukah* becomes our home, our domiciliary self-completeness is invested with the holiness of the commandment of living in the *sukah*. This experience of living inside a Divine commandment and drawing our sense of self-completeness from it enables us to live the rest of the year "surrounded by God's commandments," i.e., sanctifying our entire lives, including their most mundane aspects.²³⁷

Yet, paradoxically, while the *sukah* is given an element of permanence, it must be a temporary hut: its roof must be makeshift, and it cannot be taller than 20 cubits (9.6 m or 31.5 ft).²³⁸ This paradox conveys an important message: The experience of living in a temporary hut for seven days reminds us that life itself is ephemeral. The seven days of *Sukot* correspond to the basic human lifespan, described in the Psalms²³⁹ as consisting of 70 years.²⁴⁰ By recognizing life's inherent transience, we protect ourselves from losing our perspective in the illusion of permanence. We can then imbue the world with true permanence and meaning by transforming it into God's dwelling.²⁴¹

234. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Melukat*, vol. 1, p. 175. 235. *Sukah* 28b. 236. *Yevamot* 63a, *Tosefot ad loc.*, s.v. *sheEin*. 237. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 2, p. 418. 238. *Sukah* 2a. 239. 90:10. 240. *Sefer HaMa'amarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 1, p. 163. 241. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 9, p. 92.

Kindling the Candelabrum

◆ *Seventh Reading 24:1* God spoke to Moses, saying,

2 **“Command the Israelites to bring you olive oil** produced from the olives when they are first **crushed** in a mortar, to be used **for illumination**, i.e., for the lamps of the Candelabrum. When I first stated which quality of oil may be used for the Candelabrum,²²⁸ I insisted that it be oil that never contained any sediment, and that therefore could only be produced by crushing the olives in a mortar without first grinding them. I made this stipulation because I was referring to the oil that would be used during the installation rites at the dedication of the Tabernacle, which was celebrated lavishly and magnificently, using only the people’s finest contributions. For subsequent, ongoing use, however, such exceptionally pure oil is not necessary; even if the olives are ground before they are crushed—and the oil produced will therefore contain sediment that needs to be strained out—it is still acceptable. Nonetheless, oil produced from the second and third stages of processing—pressing and grinding again—is not acceptable for the Candelabrum but only for use in grain-offerings and the like.²²⁹

Whoever lights the lamps of the Candelabrum should take care **to kindle the lamp** until the wick catches fire and continues to burn by itself.²³⁰ The lamps must be lit **regularly**, every evening.

3 **Aaron must set up** the lighting apparatus **outside the Curtain** concealing the Ark of the **Testimony**,²³¹ **inside** the outer chamber of the **Tent of Meeting**, filling the lamps with sufficient oil to burn **regularly, from evening to morning, before God**, i.e., half a *log* [172 ml or 5.8 oz] for each lamp; this will suffice even for the long winter nights. Providing this daily supply of oil will be **an eternal duty** of the people **throughout your generations**, whenever the Tabernacle (or Temple) is standing. Ideally, the first lamp to be lit should be lit with fire taken from the Outer Altar.²³²

4 **He must set up the lamps upon the pure-gold Candelabrum, before God, regularly**, i.e., every day. He must also clean out the lamps before lighting them each evening.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

animal soul, the incense expresses the inner consciousness of our Divine soul.²³³ Our Divine soul operates on a higher plane than that of our normal, human/animal consciousness; when this soul is manifest, we transcend the limits imposed on our lives by the rationality and emotional predilections of our human/animal soul. Thus, our task on *Sukot* is first to focus on transcendent Divinity by building the *sukah* and then to internalize transcendent Divine consciousness by dwelling in the *sukah* and, as was explained above, by fulfilling the commandment of the four plant-parts.

“Transcendent” is a relative term: as we progressively understand and internalize more of God’s reality, levels of consciousness that we formerly

considered “transcendent,” i.e., beyond our grasp, become “immanent,” i.e., part of how we think and live. Commensurately, levels of Divine awareness that we formerly could not even imagine come into view and become the new “transcendent.”

The transcendent consciousness we take from the *sukah* enables us to transcend differences between us and other people as well as between normally conflicting aspects of our own psyches. The *sukah* therefore promotes peace. The very fact that the *sukah* surrounds all who are in it equally reminds us that despite our differences, we can all participate in the same commandment. To enter the *sukah*, then, is to savor a foretaste of the ultimate peace that will characterize the messianic era.²³⁴

228. Exodus 27:20-21. 229. *Menachot* 86a; *Sifra*, *Emor*, *parashah* 13:1-6. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 11, pp. 129-131. 230. Rashi on Numbers 8:2. 231. Exodus 26:35. 232. Above, 6:6; *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 17, pp. 54-55. 233. See above, on 10:1.

— ONKELOS —

5 וְתִסַּב סִלְתָּא וְתִיפִי יְתֵה תְרִמִּי
עֲשִׂרִי גְרִיצָן תְּרִין עֲשְׂרֹנִין תְּהִי
גְרִיצָתָא חָדָא: 6 וְתִשְׁנִי יְתֵהוּן
תְּרִמִּין סְדִרִין שִׁית סְדָרָא עַל
פְּתוּרָא דְכִינָא קָדָם יִי: 7 וְתִתֵּן
עַל סְדָרָא לְבוֹנָתָא דְכִינָא וְתִהִי
לְלֶחֶם לְאֲדִרְתָּא קָרְבָּנָא קָדָם יִי:
8 בְּיוֹמָא דְשַׁבְּתָא בְּיוֹמָא דְשַׁבְּתָא
יְסַדְרֵנָּה קָדָם יִי תְּדִירָא מִן קָדָם בְּנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל קִים עֲלֵם: 9 וְתִהִי לְאֶהֱרֹן
וְלִבְנָוֵהוּ וְיִכְלֹנָה בְּאַתֵּר קָדִישׁ אֲרִי
קָדִישׁ קָדִישִׁין הוּא לֵה מִקְרָבָנָא
דִּי קִים עֲלֵם: 10 וְנִפְקַב בַּר אֶתְתָּא
בֵּת יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהוּא בַר גָּבֵר מִצְרָאִי
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנִצְצוּ בְּמַחְנֶה בֶּן הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית וְאִישׁ
יִשְׂרָאֵלִי:

5 וְלִקְחָתָּ סִלְתָּ וְאֶפִּיתָ אֹתָהּ שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה חֳלוֹת שְׁנֵי
עֶשְׂרִים יִהְיֶה הַחֲלָה הָאֶחָת: 6 וְשִׁמַּתְּ אוֹתָם שְׁתֵּים
מִמְּעֲרֹכֹת שֵׁשׁ הַמְּעֲרֹכֹת עַל הַשְּׁלֶחַן הַזֶּה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:
7 וְנָתַתְּ עַל־הַמְּעֲרֹכֹת לְבֹנָה זָכָה וְהִיתָה לְלֶחֶם לְאִזְכָּרָה
אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה: 8 בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת יַעֲרֹכְנוּ לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה תָּמִיד מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם: 9 וְהִיתָה
לְאֶהֱרֹן וּלְבָנָיו וְאֶכְלָהוּ בְּמִקְוֹם קָדֹשׁ כִּי קָדֹשׁ קִדְּשִׁים
הוּא לוֹ מֵאִשֵּׁי יְהוָה חֹק־עוֹלָם: 10 וַיֵּצֵא בֶן־אִשָּׁה יִשְׂרָאֵלִית וְהוּא בֶן־אִישׁ מִצְרִי
בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּנָּצוּ בְּמַחְנֶה בֶּן הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית וְאִישׁ
הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי:

— RASHI —

יִשְׂרָאֵלִית. מִהִיכָן יָצָא רַבִּי לִוִּי אוֹמֵר: מֵעוֹלָמוֹ יָצָא.
רַבִּי בְּרַכְיָה אוֹמֵר: מִפְּרָשָׁה שְׁלֹמַעְלָה יָצָא, לְגַלְגַּל
וְאָמַר: "בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת יַעֲרֹכְנוּ", דֶּרֶךְ הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאָכַל
פֶּת חֲמָה בְּכָל יוֹם, אוֹ שְׂמָא פֶת צוֹנְנֵת שֶׁל תִּשְׁעָה
יָמִים, בְּתַמְיָה. וּמִתְנִיתָא אֲמָרָה: מִבֵּית דִּינוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה
יָצָא מִחֵיב, בָּא לְשַׁע אֶהֱלֹ בְּתוֹךְ מַחְנֶה דָן, אָמְרוּ לוֹ:
מַה טִּיבָךְ לְכָאן? אָמַר לָהֶם: מִבְּנֵי דָן אָנִי. אָמְרוּ לוֹ:
"אִישׁ עַל דְּגָלוֹ בָּאתָ לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם" כְּתִיבִי. נִכְנַס
לְבֵית דִּינוֹ שֶׁל מֹשֶׁה וַיָּצֵא מִחֵיב, עָמַד וְגִדְּף: **בֶּן אִישׁ**
מִצְרִי. הוּא הַמִּצְרִי שֶׁהָרְגוּ מֹשֶׁה: **בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**.
מִלְּמַד שְׁנִיתֵגֵד: **וַיִּנָּצוּ בְּמַחְנֶה**. עַל עֲסָקֵי הַמַּחְנֶה: **וְאִישׁ**
הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי. זֶה שֶׁכָּנְגְדוּ, שִׁמְחָה בּוֹ מִטַּעַם אֶהֱלֹ:

6 שֵׁשׁ הַמְּעֲרֹכֹת. שֵׁשׁ חֳלוֹת הַמְּעֲרֹכָה הָאֶחָת: הַשְּׁלֶחַן
הַזֶּה. שֶׁל זָהָב טָהוֹר. דָּבָר אֲחֵר: עַל טָהוֹר שֶׁל
שְׁלֶחַן, שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ הַסְּנִיפִין מְגַבִּיהִין אֶת הַלֶּחֶם מֵעַל
גְּבִי הַשְּׁלֶחַן: 7 וְנָתַתְּ עַל הַמְּעֲרֹכֹת. עַל כָּל אֶחָת
מִשְׁתֵּי הַמְּעֲרֹכֹת, הָיוּ שְׁנֵי בְּזִיכֵי לְבוֹנָה, מִלֹּא קִמֵּץ
לְכָל אֶחָת: וְהִיתָה. הַלְּבֹנָה הַזֹּאת: לְלֶחֶם לְאִזְכָּרָה.
שָׂאִין מִן הַלֶּחֶם לְגִבּוֹהַ כְּלוּם, אֶלֹא הַלְּבֹנָה נִקְטְרַת
בְּשִׁמְסִלְקִין אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל שַׁבָּת וְשַׁבָּת, וְהִיא לְזִכְרוֹן
לְלֶחֶם, שֶׁעַל יָדָהּ הוּא נִזְכָּר לְמַעֲלָה, בְּקִמֵּץ שֶׁהוּא
אִזְכָּרָה לְמַחְנֶה: 9 וְהִיתָה. הַמַּחְנֶה הַזֹּאת, שֶׁכָּל
דָּבָר הֵבֵא מִן הַתְּבוּאָה בְּכָלֵל מַחְנֶה הוּא: וְאֶכְלָהוּ.
מוֹסַב עַל הַלֶּחֶם, שֶׁהוּא לְשׁוֹן זָכָר: 10 וַיֵּצֵא בֶן אִשָּׁה

45. במדבר ב, ב.

then bore a son from this union. Since the rule that membership in the Jewish people is inherited matrilineally became effective only later, when the Torah was given, this son was not considered a born Israelite, despite having been born to a Jewish mother. Nonetheless, he accompanied his mother and her family when they left Egypt, and he subsequently converted.

Now, some 60 or more years later, when the people, at God's command, set about organizing their camp according to tribes, **the son of this Israelite woman** (She-lomit bat Dibri) **and the Egyptian man** who had violated her tried to pitch his tent together with his mother's tribe—Dan—arguing that since he had converted, he should be **considered an Israelite**. The other members of the tribe of Dan protested that God had explicitly stated that tribal lineage follows the father,²⁵⁰

249. See v. 11, below. 250. Numbers 2:2.

As you know, the lamps of the Candelabrum are aligned from east to west.²⁴² Thus, as one proceeds inward (i.e., westward) into the Sanctuary, the first lamp one encounters that can be called ‘the western lamp’ is the second one, since it is the first lamp that is west of another lamp.²⁴³ Now, each of these lamps must be filled with an equal amount of oil each evening. But whereas the others will stay lit only until the following morning, this second lamp will miraculously stay lit throughout the entire day, until the following evening. This miracle will testify that My Divine presence rests among the Jewish people.

The Showbread

5 This is how you must prepare the showbread.²⁴⁴ **You must take fine flour and bake it into twelve unleavened loaves. Each loaf must be made from two-tenths of an *ephah* [5 liters or 1.3 gallons] of flour.**

6 **You must arrange them in two stacks, six in each stack, upon the Table,** which is overlaid with **pure** gold and situated ‘**before God,**’ i.e., in the outer chamber of the Tabernacle.²⁴⁵ The lowermost loaf of each stack must rest directly on the Table.

7 **You must place** a spoon filled with **pure frankincense alongside each stack.** The frankincense **will be a memorial-portion for the bread,**²⁴⁶ for none of the bread will be burned up on the Altar. Rather, when the showbread loaves are removed from the Table on the Sabbath in order to be distributed to the priests, the frankincense must likewise be removed in order to be burned up on the Altar as **a fire-offering to God.**

8 You must have new loaves baked every Friday; **every Sabbath day,** a priest **must arrange** the stacks of fresh showbread on the Table ‘**before God,**’ where they will remain **continuously** until the next Sabbath, when they will be removed and, miraculously still fresh, be given to the priests and replaced by the next week’s loaves. The showbread, baked from flour purchased with communal funds, will be an offering **from the Israelites.** Its perennial freshness will be a manifestation of the **eternal covenant** between Me and the people.

9 The showbread **will belong to Aaron and his sons** to eat; **they must eat it in a holy place,** i.e., within the Tabernacle precincts, **for it** has the same status as an offering of **superior holiness for him** and the other priests, being—on account of its ‘memorial’ portion—one of the **fire-offerings of God.** It will be an **eternal entitlement** of the priests’.”

Punishments for Cursing God and for Causing Damages

10 The Torah will recount later²⁴⁷ that on the 1st of Iyar, 2449—one month after the Tabernacle was erected and began functioning on an ongoing basis—God instructed Moses to take a census of the people and organize their camp according to tribes.

It was recounted earlier²⁴⁸ that when the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, one of the Egyptian taskmasters violated a Jewess nicknamed Shelomit bat Dibri,²⁴⁹ who

242. Exodus 26:35. 243. Rashi on *Shabbat* 22b, s.v. *Neir Ma'aravi*. 244. Exodus 25:29-30. 245. Ibid. 25:23-29. 246. See 2:2, above. 247. Numbers 1:1-2:34. 248. Exodus 2:11.

— ONKELOS —

11 ופרש בר אתתא בת ישראל
ית שמא וארגו ואיתאיו יתה לות
משה ושום אמה שלמית בת דברי
לשבטא דין: 12 ואסרוהי בבית
מטרא עד דיתפרש להון על גזרת
מימרא דיי: 13 ומליל יי עם משה
למימר: 14 אפק ית דארגו למברא
למשריתא ויסמכון כל דשמעו ית
ידיהון על רישה וירגמו יתה כל
בנשתא:

11 וַיִּקָּב בֶּן־הָאִשָּׁה הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית אֶת־הַשֵּׁם וַיִּקְלָל וַיִּבְיֹאוּ
אֹתוֹ אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְשֵׁם אָמוֹ שְׁלִמִית בַּת־דָּבְרִי לַמִּטְהַדֵּן:
12 וַיִּנְיְחוּהוּ בַּמִּשְׁמָר לִפְרֹשׁ לָהֶם עַל־פִּי יְהוָה: פ
13 וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵּאמֹר: 14 הוֹצֵא אֶת־הַמְּקַלֶּל
אֶל־מַחוּיֹן לַמַּחֲנֶה וְסָמְכוּ כָּל־הַשְּׁמָעִים אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־
רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּרְגְּמוּ אוֹתוֹ כָּל־הָעֵדָה:

— RASHI —

12 וַיִּנְיְחוּהוּ. לְבַדּוֹ, וְלֹא הֵנִיחוּ מְקוּשָׁשׁ עִמּוֹ, שֶׁשְּׁנֵיהֶם
הָיוּ בְּפָרֶק אֶחָד, וַיּוֹדְעִים הָיוּ שֶׁהִמְקוּשָׁשׁ בְּמִיתָה,
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "מִחֻלְלֵי מוֹת יוֹמָת", אֲבָל לֹא פָּרַשׁ לָהֶם
בְּאִיזוֹ מִיתָה, לָכֵף נֶאֱמַר: "כִּי לֹא פָּרַשׁ מִדֵּי יַעֲשֶׂה
לוֹ". אֲבָל בַּמְּקַלֶּל הוּא אוֹמֵר: "לִפְרֹשׁ לָהֶם", שֶׁלֹּא
הָיוּ יוֹדְעִים אִם חֵיב מִיתָה אִם לֹא: 14 הַשְּׁמָעִים. אֵלּוּ
הָעֵדִים: כָּל. לְהַבִּיא אֶת הַדִּינִים: אֵת יְדֵיהֶם. אוֹמְרִים
לוֹ: דְּמָךְ בְּרֹאשְׁךָ, וְאֵין אָנוּ נֶעֱנָשִׁים בְּמִיתָתְךָ, שֶׁאַתָּה
גִּרְמָתָ לָךְ: כָּל הָעֵדָה. בְּמַעֲמַד כָּל הָעֵדָה, מִכָּאן
שֶׁשְׁלֹחֹהוּ שֶׁל אָדָם כְּמוֹתוֹ:

11 וַיִּקָּב. כְּתִרְגוּמוֹ: "וּפְרֹשׁ", שֶׁנֶּקֶב שֵׁם הַמִּיחָד
וְגַדֵּף, וְהוּא שֵׁם הַמְּפָרֵשׁ שֶׁשָּׁמַע מְסִינִי: וְשֵׁם אָמוֹ
שְׁלִמִית בַּת דָּבְרִי. שֶׁבָּחַן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁפָּרַסְמָה
הַכְּתוּב לִזוֹ, לֹאמַר שֶׁהִיא לְבַדָּה הֵיחָד זֹנָה: שְׁלִמִית.
וְהָיָה פִּטְפֻטָּה: שָׁלֵם עָלָהּ, שָׁלֵם עָלָהּ, שָׁלֵם עָלֵיכֶן,
מִפְּטֻטָּת בְּדָבָרִים, שׁוֹאֵלֶת בְּשָׁלוֹם הַכֹּל: בַּת דָּבְרִי.
דְּבָרֵינִי הֵיחָד, מִדְּבָרֵת עִם כָּל אָדָם, לִפְיָךְ קִלְקֵלָה:
לְמִשָּׁה דָּן. מְגִיד שֶׁהִרְשַׁע גּוֹרֵם גָּנְאִי לוֹ, גָּנְאִי לְאֲבִיו,
גָּנְאִי לְשִׁבְטוֹ. כִּיּוֹצֵא בּוֹ: "אֶהְיֶיב בֶּן אֲהִיִּסְמָךְ
לְמִשָּׁה דָּן", שֶׁבַח לוֹ, שֶׁבַח לְאֲבִיו, שֶׁבַח לְשִׁבְטוֹ:

46. שמות לא, ו. 47. שמות לא, יד. 48. במדבר טו, לד.

13 God spoke to Moses, saying:

14 "Cursing God is indeed a capital offense. However, the court can only punish someone for a crime if he was properly warned beforehand, and this includes informing him of the consequences of his crime. Since I had not yet informed you that this crime is a capital offense, the curser could not have been properly warned; hence, the court cannot administer capital punishment in this case.

Nonetheless, the curser certainly knew that he would be punished in *some* way; therefore, you will punish him in a way similar to the prescribed punishment for cursing God, which is death by stoning. Now, as you know,²⁶⁰ the procedure for death by stoning is that first the witnesses cast the criminal down from a place twice his height; if he does not die from the fall, they cast a stone upon him; if he does not die from this, the people stone him until he dies. But in the present case, all the court may do is cast a single stone upon him, which may or may not kill him.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

12 They placed him in the guardhouse: The Torah does not forbid incarceration; the court is allowed to imprison criminals or suspected criminals when they find it necessary.²⁶¹ But it never prescribes incarceration as a punishment. Here, too, the curser

was not imprisoned as a punishment but simply to detain him while it was determined what should be done.²⁶²

As we have pointed out, the Torah's punishments are not merely punitive; they are intended to rectify

260. Exodus 19:13; Deuteronomy 17:7. 261. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 4, pp. 2357-2358. 262. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 5, p. 2274.

and therefore, since this man's father was an Egyptian, he could not pitch his tent among them (and would in fact have to camp outside the Clouds of Glory, together with the mixed multitude²⁵¹). They presented their case to Moses' court of law, which decided in favor of the representative of the tribe of Dan. Upon hearing the verdict, Shelomit's son angrily **left** the court where he—**this son of the Israelite woman—and the Israelite man** representing the tribe of Dan **had quarreled regarding** the former's right to pitch his tent in **the camp**.

11 In his anger, **the son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name of God, cursing Him**. He seized upon the rule that the showbread be given to the priests to eat on the ninth day after it is baked²⁵² and mocked it, saying, "An earthly king is served warm, fresh bread daily. Is it proper, then, for God to be 'served' cold, nine-day-old stale bread?!"—ignoring the fact that it was precisely the miraculous continued freshness of the showbread that testified to the continued 'freshness' of God's covenant with Israel.

The Israelites knew that cursing God was a sin,²⁵³ but did not know if it was a capital crime, **so they brought him to Moses. His mother's nickname²⁵⁴ was Shelomit bat Dibri, of the tribe of Dan**. She was known by this name because she was excessively talkative (*dibri*), habitually inquiring after the welfare (*shalom*) of everyone she met.

The Torah mentions this woman by name in order to indicate that she was the only Israelite woman ever violated by an Egyptian; this in turn testifies to the fact that the rest of the Israelite women in Egypt were so exemplarily chaste that they were not violated even unwillingly or unknowingly.²⁵⁵ The Torah refers to her by her nickname in order to indicate that the reason the Egyptian was drawn to violate specifically her was because of her immodest talkativeness, which drew undue attention to her.²⁵⁶ It mentions the name of her tribe in order to indicate that improper behavior dishonors not only those who behave improperly but their parents and tribe, as well, just as proper behavior honors not only those who behave properly but their parents and tribe, as well—as seen by the mention of the artisan Oholiav's descent from the same tribe of Dan.²⁵⁷

12 Moses had not yet heard from God if someone who curses Him is liable to capital punishment, so **they placed the curser in the guardhouse** until the law would **be clarified to them by the word of God**.

∞ CHASIDIC INSIGHTS ∞

11 His mother's nickname was Shelomit bat Dibri: Although the Torah only uses this woman's nickname, it still identifies her, thereby apparently shaming her in public when such embarrassment could have been avoided. Needless to say, this seems inconsistent with the lesson the Torah teaches us elsewhere in this regard.²⁵⁸

We must therefore conclude that the Torah is actually praising her by mentioning her name in con-

nection with this incident. The praise consists of the fact that she was singled out by Divine providence to be one through whom the exemplary chastity of the Israelite women was demonstrated.

This, in fact, is the way that transgressions are transformed into merits in general: by serving as catalysts for proper behavior. By serving as a negative example, Shelomit inspired future generations to live up to the example set by our forebears in Egypt.²⁵⁹

251. Exodus 12:38. 252. Above, v. 8. 253. Exodus 22:27. 254. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, p. 68. 255. See Numbers 26:2. 256. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, pp. 67-69. 257. Exodus 31:6, 35:34, 36:1-2, 38:23. 258. E.g., in Genesis 38:25. 259. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 37, pp. 67-71.

— ONKELOS —

15 וְעַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּמְלַל לְמִימְרֵי
גִבּוֹר גִּבּוֹר דִּי יִרְגֹז קָדָם אֱלֹהֵיהּ
וְיִקְבֵּל חֻבָּה: 16 וְדִי יִפְרֹשׁ שְׁמָא
דִּי אֲתִקְטֹלָא יִתְקַטֵּל מִרְגָּם יִרְגָּמוּ
בֵּה כָּל כְּנִשְׁתָּא כְּגִיזְרָא כִּי צִיבָא
בְּפִרְשֻׁתָּהּ שְׁמָא יִתְקַטֵּל: 17 וְגִבּוֹר
אֲרִי יִקְטוֹל כָּל נִפְשָׁא דְאֲנָשָׁא
אֲתִקְטֹלָא יִתְקַטֵּל: 18 וְדִי קְטוֹל
נִפְשָׁא בְּעִירָא יִשְׁלַמְנָה נִפְשָׁא חֶלְף
נִפְשָׁא: 19 וְגִבּוֹר אֲרִי יִתֵּן מוֹמָא
בְּחִבְרָה כְּמָא דִּי עֶבֶד כֵּן יִתְעַבִּיד
לֵה: 20 תִּבְרָא חֶלְף תִּבְרָא עֵינָא
חֶלְף עֵינָא שְׁנָא חֶלְף שְׁנָא כְּמָא דִּי
יִתֵּן מוֹמָא בְּאֲנָשָׁא כֵּן יִתִּיב בֵּה:

15 וְאֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּדְבֹּר לְאֹמֶר אִישׁ אִישׁ כִּי־יִקְלָל
אֱלֹהָיו וְנָשָׂא חֲטָאוֹ: 16 וְנִקְבַּשׁ שֵׁם־יְהוָה מוֹת יוֹמָת רָגוֹם
יִרְגָּמוּבוֹ כָּל־הָעֵדָה בֶּגֶר בְּאִזְרוֹת בְּנִקְבוֹשִׁים יוֹמָת:
17 וְאִישׁ כִּי יִכֶּה כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ אָדָם מוֹת יוֹמָת: 18 וּמִכֶּה
נֶפֶשׁ־בְּהֵמָה יִשְׁלַמְנָה נֶפֶשׁ תַּחַת נֶפֶשׁ: 19 וְאִישׁ כִּי־יִתֵּן
מוֹם בְּעַמִּיתוֹ בְּאִשֶּׁר עִשָּׂה בֶן יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ: 20 שֹׁבֵר תַּחַת
שֹׁבֵר עֵין תַּחַת עֵין שֹׁן תַּחַת שֹׁן בְּאִשֶּׁר יִתֵּן מוֹם בְּאָדָם
כֵּן יִתֵּן בּוֹ:

— RASHI —

אֶת הָאִישׁ, אֲשֶׁר וְקָטָן מִנֵּי? תִּלְמוּד לומר: "כָּל נֶפֶשׁ
אָדָם": 20 כֵּן יִתֵּן בּוֹ. פֶּרֶשׁוֹ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂאִינוֹ נִתְּנָה
מוֹם מִמֶּשׁ, אֶלָּא תִּשְׁלֹמִי מוֹמוֹ, שְׁמִין אוֹתוֹ כְּעֶבֶד,
לְכָף כְּתוּב בּוֹ לְשׁוֹן נִתְּנָה, דְּבַר הַנִּתּוֹן מִיָּד לִיד:

15 וְנָשָׂא חֲטָאוֹ. בְּכֶרֶת, כְּשֶׁאֵין הַתְּרָאָה: 16 וְנִקְבַּשׁ שֵׁם.
אֵינוֹ חֵיב עַד שְׂיִפְרֹשׁ אֶת הַשֵּׁם, וְלֹא הַמְקַלֵּל בְּכִנּוּי:
וְנִקְבַּשׁ. לְשׁוֹן קָלָלָהּ, כְּמוֹ: "מָה אָקֵב": 17 וְאִישׁ כִּי יִכֶּה.
לְפִי שְׁנָאֵמֶר: "מִכֶּה אִישׁ וְיָמָת" וגו', אֵין לִי אֶלָּא שְׁהִירָג

49. במדבר כג, ח. 50. שמות כא, יב. 51. בבא קמא פד, א.

monetary compensation for eyesight must be made for the loss of eyesight; monetary compensation for a tooth must be made for the loss of a tooth. According to the monetary repercussions of the blemish he inflicts upon a person, so must he be assessed. The assailant must pay the victim the difference between the price he would command on the slave market before and after sustaining the injury.

— CHASIDIC INSIGHTS —

the spiritual or material damage that was wrought, enabling the criminal to right the wrong he committed. The Torah therefore considers locking someone up counterproductive, for doing so denies him the opportunity to act.²⁷² Every person exists in this world for a purpose; every moment has its potential that must be fulfilled. These truths apply even to someone who has committed crimes.

If a person has transgressed so terribly that there is no longer hope for him and he can no longer contribute in any way to society, the Torah instructs us to put him to death. Any person who is not deemed liable to death by the Torah, however, is not considered to be beyond salvation.²⁷³

Although we may not believe in jails as a worthwhile punishment, we are enjoined to follow the law of the land.²⁷⁴ Based upon the above insight,

however, recent moves towards rehabilitative as opposed to purely punitive incarceration are worthy and welcome. Prisoners should be provided with opportunities for education and religious instruction, and furlough and parole programs should be available for those who have proven themselves ready to turn over a new leaf.²⁷⁵

16 One who pronounces the Name of God must be put to death: The word for "pronounce" (נוקב) literally means "to puncture." Failure to observe any given commandment drills a hole, so to speak, in God's Name, draining it of its Divine energy. Instead of sustaining and spiritually invigorating all the spiritual and physical worlds, this Divine energy is wasted and may even bolster negativity. Such an act warrants a death penalty, for it, too, has drained the life-blood of existence.²⁷⁶

272. *Hitva'aduyot* 5710, pp. 195-196. 273. *Sichot Kodesh* 5736, vol. 1, pp. 612-616, 676; *Hitva'aduyot* 5710, pp. 195-196; *Igrot Kodesh*, vol. 9, pp. 194-195. 274. *Nedarim* 28a, etc. 275. *Hitva'aduyot* 5745, vol. 4, pp. 2274-2275. 276. *Ma'amarei Admor HaZaken* 5666, p. 315.

Therefore, try the curser in court. The witnesses must repeat to the judges what they heard him say. After he is pronounced guilty, **take the curser outside the camp, and all who heard his curse**—both the witnesses, who heard it firsthand, and the judges, who heard it from the witnesses—**must lean their hands on his head** and say: ‘Although we are not legally authorized to execute you, if you nevertheless die from what we are about to do to you, your death is your own fault; none of us will be held culpable for your death.’ After this, in the presence of the entire community, the witnesses must together cast one stone upon the curser. Inasmuch as they are the representatives of the entire community, it will be as though **the entire community will have stoned him** with this **one stone**.²⁶³ If he dies from this, he dies; if not, they may not throw any additional stones at him.

But although the court is legally prevented from inflicting the death penalty upon this curser, nonetheless, due to the heinousness of this crime, and as an exception to the general rule, I command the rest of the community to administer the rest of the execution as generally prescribed.²⁶⁴ In addition, the curser has lost his share in the afterlife.²⁶⁵

15 Therefore, before trying the curser, **you must speak to the Israelites**, in order to inform them of (or review with them) the punishments for all the following transgressions, **saying: ‘Any man who curses his God** without having been warned and witnessed **must still bear his sin**; I will punish him with excision.

16 If, however, he was warned and witnessed, then **one who pronounces the proper Name of God** as part of his curse **must be put to death**; if however, he employs another Name or an appellation, he is only punished with lashes.²⁶⁶ If he is liable to the death penalty, the witnesses must stone him according to the prescribed procedure;²⁶⁷ inasmuch as they are the representatives of the whole people, it will be as though **the entire community will have stoned him** to death. **Whether he is a convert or a native Israelite, if he pronounces the Divine Name** as part of his curse, **he must be put to death**.

17 As you have been taught,²⁶⁸ **if an adult man or woman strikes any human being** mortally, other than a living but non-viable premature baby,²⁶⁹ **he must be put to death**.

18 You have been taught that if one of your animals, your fire, or your pit causes damage,²⁷⁰ you must pay for this damage. This is all the more true if you yourself cause damage: **One who strikes** and thereby kills **an animal must pay for it**. Exact from him the monetary value of the animal’s **life according to** the monetary value of the animal’s **life** that he took.

19 As you have been taught,²⁷¹ regarding **a man who blemishes his fellow man, according to** the monetary damage **he caused, so must he be assessed** monetarily:

20 monetary compensation for **a fracture** must be made **for an inflicted fracture**;

263. See Exodus 12:6. 264. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, pp. 158-167. 265. Rashi on v. 10, above. 266. *Mishneh Torah, Avodat Kochavim* 2:7. 267. Exodus 19:13; Deuteronomy 17:7. 268. Exodus 21:12. 269. Rashi on Exodus 21:12. 270. Exodus 21:33-36, 22:4-5. 271. *Ibid.* 21:24.

— ONKELOS —

21 ודיקטול בעירא ישלמנה
ודיקטול אנשא יתקטל: 22 דינא
חד יהי לבון בגיורא כיציקא יהי
ארי אנא יי אלהיו: 23 ומליל
משה עם בני ישראל ואפיקו ית
דארגז למברא למשריתא ורגמו
יתיה אבנא ובני ישראל עבדו כמא
די פקד יי ית משה:

◆ מפטיר 21 ומכה בהמה ישלמנה ומכה אדם יומת:
22 משפט אחד יהיה לכם כגור באורח יהיה כי אני
יהוה אלהיכם: 23 וידבר משה אל בני ישראל ויצאו
את המקל אל מחוץ למחנה ורגמו אתו אבן ובני
ישראל עשו כאשר צוה יהוה את משה:

קכ"ד פסוקים. עזריאל סימן.

— RASHI —

במכה שפטור. ומה בבמה בחבלה, שאם אין
חבלה אין תשלומין, אף מכה אביו ואמו אינו חייב
עד שיעשה בהם חבורה: 22 אני ה' אלהיכם. אלהי
כלכם, כשם שאני מיוחד שמי עליכם, כך אני מיוחד
שמי על הגרים: 23 ובני ישראל עשו. כל המצוה
האמורה בסקילה במקום אחר, דחיה רגימה ותליה:
חסלת פרשת אמור

21 ומכה בהמה ישלמנה. למעלה דבר בחורג בהמה,
וכאן דבר בעושה בה חבורה: ומכה אדם יומת. אפלו
לא הרגו, אלא עשה בו חבורה, שלא נאמר כאן
"נפש". ובמכה אביו ואמו דבר הכתוב, ובא להקישו
למכה בהמה: מה מכה בהמה — מחיים, אף מכה
אביו ואמו — מחיים, פרט למכה לאחר מיתה. לפי
שמצינו שהמקל ללאחר מיתה חייב, הצריך לומר

- ◆ **Maftir 21 One who injures an animal must also pay for it:** he must compensate the animal's owner for the decrease in the animal's monetary value caused by the injury.

In contrast, as you have been taught,²⁷⁷ **one who injures his parent must be put to death**, even if he does not kill them thereby. This rule applies only while the parents are alive; striking one's parent's corpse is not a capital offense.

22 The same laws apply to all of you, convert and native Israelite alike, for I, God, am the God of both of you."

23 Moses told all this to the Israelites. So they took the curser outside the camp, where the witnesses leaned their hands on his head and **stoned him** with one stone, as directed, **after which** (since he did not die from the court's one stone) **the rest of the Israelites performed** the rest of the prescribed procedures for execution by stoning: pushing him off the height, stoning him to death, and hanging his corpse.²⁷⁸ All of this—both the punishment administered by the court and the execution administered by the community—was carried out exactly **as God had commanded Moses**.²⁷⁹

The *Haftarah* for *parashat Emor* is on p. 254.



277. Exodus 21:15. 278. Ibid. 19:13; Deuteronomy 17:7. 279. *Likutei Sichot*, vol. 7, pp. 158-167.

Dedicated in honor of our children

**Nathan, Yitzchok,
Moshe Lev,
and Gilana**

*May you continue to grow in the ways
of our holy Torah*

Yuri and Deana Pikover

