

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

The *b'racha* and *s'fira* of the Omer must be said while standing, as for all *birchos hamitzvah*. One should be careful, in the event that he didn't count yet, and is asked "how many days do we count tonight? ", that he should not say the number of that night, because he would not be permitted to count with a *b'racha* after that. However, if he did respond with the number of the day, and it is after the 7th day, since he has to mention the weeks, he could still count with a *b'racha*. If one only counted weeks, and not the days, he was not *yotzeh* (didn't fulfill his obligation), even if it was the 7th, 14th, 21st, etc. and must count with a *b'racha*. If one counted only days and not weeks, he should count again without a *b'racha*. If someone forgot to count one of the days altogether, he continues counting without a *b'racha*, and it is preferable to ask someone to be *motzie* him with the *b'racha*. If someone is not sure if he counted one day, he is allowed to continue counting with a *b'racha*. Those who are more meticulous don't count until after *tzais hakochavim*, and if one counted during *bain hashemashos*, it is better to count again after it is definitely night, but obviously without a *b'racha*. If one normally waits to count later, and is in a *minyan* that is counting earlier, he could count without a *b'racha* with them, lest he forget to count altogether, and make a condition that if he remembers later to count, he will not be *yotzeh* with the earlier counting, and he thus could count later with a *b'racha*. If one forgot to count during the night, he could count during the day without a *b'racha*, and then continue counting the rest of the nights with a *b'racha*. If one doesn't understand Hebrew, he should count in English. One should be certain before he makes the *b'racha* which day it is that he will be counting. If one counted the wrong number, and reminded himself immediately, he can correct himself without repeating the *b'racha*; otherwise, he should repeat the *b'racha* and count the right number. There are different customs regarding whether women should count, with or without a *b'racha*, but according to *halacha*, although they are not obligated, they may count with a *b'racha* and should try to make sure not to forget, and count all the days. Children should also be trained to count, and helped by being reminded to do so every night (or day).

Between Pesach and Shavuot the disciples of Rabbi Akiva died, and the world was desolate from Torah, and that is why we observe certain practices of *aveilus*, like not making weddings, taking haircuts and not dancing and listening to music. There are various customs how to count the 33 days that we restrict ourselves from these practices, and one can change from year to year and do one methodology one year, and a different one the next year, because it is all one *minhag* (custom), just with many ways to carry it out. It is permitted for someone who keeps the earlier count to go to a wedding before Rosh Chodesh Iyyar, and for someone who keeps the second count to go to a *chassunah* in the beginning of Sivan (Igros Moshe 1:195). There are times when one is allowed to cut hair or shave during *s'fira*. If Rosh Chodesh Iyyar comes out on Shabbos or on Friday (as it did this year), one is allowed to cut his hair on Erev Shabbos, preferably during the day. If someone finished *shloshim* during *s'fira* and has a headache because of the hair, he may take a haircut as well. A person that has a health condition that causes him suffering unless he takes a haircut may do so. If a person will incur a monetary loss if he doesn't cut his hair, he may be lenient, but some Poskim hold he should do *hattaras nedarim*, and one should not rely on this *heter* without asking a Rav (Igros Moshe 4:102). If someone's mustache is too long, and it bothers him while he eats, or a woman's bangs show, they are also allowed to cut them. If there is a special need, there is flexibility to the prohibition of cutting hair for women and children (Igros Moshe YD 2:137). The father of a baby having a *bris*, the *sandak* and the *mohel* are allowed to cut their hair the day before (MB 493:13). On the occasion of a *s'eudas mitzvah* it is permitted to dance, like at a *bris*, *pidyon haben*, a *siyum*, and a *s'eudas Bar Mitzvah* on the day he turns 13 (Igros Moshe 2:95). It is permitted to make a *hachnasas sefer* Torah with music and dancing. A professional musician is allowed to play for *parnasah* (for *goyim*), and so, too, a teacher or student of music is allowed to play for practice, but not for enjoyment (Igros Moshe 3:87). It is permitted to say *shehecheyanu* during *s'fira* if the opportunity presented itself, and on Shabbos during the Omer, it is permitted *lechatchila* to say *shehecheyanu* (MB 493:2). One is allowed to buy a garment and make a *shehecheyanu* on it on Shabbos, and if he should need to start wearing it during the week, we look at it as a sudden need, and he may say *shehecheyanu* and wear it. However, many have the *minhag* not to wear new clothing during the *s'fira* (Leket Yosher pg. 97, a Talmid of the T'rumas Hadeshen). Even acc. to this view, it applies only to important clothing, not to shoes, socks or underwear (Kinyan Torah § 109). One is allowed to paint and do all other types of work in one's home during *s'fira* (Tzitz Eliezer 11:41).

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (Amos 9:7-15)

This week's haftarah (of Acharei Mos) is from the final *perek* of Sefer Amos and begins with the words הלא כבני כשׂיים אתם לי ב"י. In the past we've brought the Malbim's explanation of the Navi's comparison of the Jewish people to Kushites as a positive symbol of our distinctiveness. This uniqueness that makes us stand out amongst the nations, no matter where in the world we may travel, is our Torah-based morality. Rashi, though, takes a different approach and explains this *pasuk* as an admonishment from Hashem, "Why should I refrain from punishing you? As long as you do not repent, you're no better than any other nation who are all descendents of Noach, including the Kushites to whom the Navi Yirmiyahu (13:25) has unfavorably compared you!" Abarbanel explains the phrase בני כשׂיים, as does the Malbim, in a positive manner but with a different twist. This entire *nevuah* is one of comfort. It begins with Hashem assuring the people that His love for them is eternal and that only we will forever be His servants. To what can the Navi compare this relationship? To the only other permanent Master/servant relationship that is in existence: the one between Cham the son of Noach and his brothers. Other nations throughout history might have merited Hashem's mercy, and may have been saved from servitude to others nations (as were the P'lishtim and Aram), but they had no permanent relationship with Hashem. In fact, these nations no longer exist! By contrast, Kush, the son of Cham, is forever servant to the rest of humanity with no chance of it ever ending! It is this permanence that the Navi highlights. The Navi concludes the *nevuah* by assuring the people that it is this unique connection between Hashem and His people that will be the determining factor in our final *geulah*.

ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

In this *paresha* we find several variations of the root מות, "to die": מות יומתו שנייהם (20:12) and מות יומתו דמיהם במ (20:13). In the first *passuk* the מ of יומתו has a *sh'va*, but in the second it has a *kamatz*. Despite this difference, the meaning in both cases is the same; יומתו is *binyan huf'al*, a causative *binyan*, so it means "[they] should be put to death". The reason for the change in vowel is contextual. In certain situations, frequently a heavy pause, a *sh'va* preceding a consonant and vowel becomes a long vowel and the accent shifts to that letter. Thus, in *passuk* 12 above, the normal form of the verb, there is a *sh'va* under the מ and the word is accented on the last syllable ("yu-me-SU"). In *passuk* 13, however, that *sh'va* changes to a *kamatz* and the accent shifts to the מ: "yu-MA-su" because of the strong pause on the word. Another example is found twice in the *mizmor* we recite before *teki'as shofar*. The *passuk* says (Tehillim 47:7), זמר למלכנו זמר. The normal form of the word is "za-me-RU" – "sing", with a *sh'va* under the מ. However, in the second instance in this *passuk*, which is a pause, the word becomes "za-MAY-ru", with the *sh'va* changing to a *tzeireh* and the accent shifting to the מ.

A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

שם בד קדש...ולבשם - The clothes of the Kohen Gadol in which he performed the Avodah were worn on only one occasion, and then they were "retired". There is a *remez* to this in the word ולבשם, which can be rearranged to read שם בלו - they disintegrated right then and there.

SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת				ערב שבת		
מעריב	מנחה	סוּק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ן
8:45	6:15/7:25	9:23	6:50/8:20	7:53	6:13/7:38	6:31-36/7:35
ב"ב Monday and Thursday, Shacharis at 6:50						
SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; MAARIV Mon-Th 9:30; MINCHA/MAARIV Sun -Th 7:43; next Fri. 6:19/7:46 (candles 6:37/7:43)						

KNESSES NEWS

MEMBERSHIP MEETING in the Shul, Motz'ei Shabbos 9:45 PM, agenda includes budget and elections

COMMUNITY CORNER

PIRCHEI for boys 2:30-3:30PM in the Shul

MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861

MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, Sun. 1:30; S-Th 15m<shki'a; שבת 1:30/5:00/נ'הדלק"ן; MAARIV M-Th 40m>shki'a/9:45

DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30; M-Fri 6:25/7:00/7:30

MINCHA at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 1:40/6:30; שבת 6:00; MAARIV daily at 9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mo-Fr. 6:40; Sun. 6:30/7:30

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ONGOING SHIURIM

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael; 5:40AM at Zichron Yehuda (*chabura*)

Maseches Chullin (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael

Hilchos Shabbos chabura, Shabbos, after the early minyan

Navi Melachim for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe

Minchas Chinuch Sun. 8:30PM by R' Bronspigel at Zichron Yehuda

Maseches Brachos, Shabbos morning, half hour before Shacharis, by R' Yehoshua Kohl at Kehillat New Hempstead

Ladies Shiur: Shabbos 5PM, by Rabbi Krasnjanski, at Reitman, 72 South Gate

Mondays 8:40 PM, **Sefer Yehoshua**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler

Wednesdays 10:45-11:45AM, **Pareshas Hashavua**, by Mrs. Sussi Brecher, at Lazar, 2 Tracey Ct. (corner of South Gate)

MECHOCHMAS HAS'FORNO ... By Rabbi Shmuel Burstein

S'forno stretches a giant פשט סוכת, beginning with מתן תורה and reaching through *parashas* Kedoshim. He unites the disparate *mitzvos* and the many ideas contained therein. Rav Kupperman's *perush* is extremely helpful in deciphering what it is that S'forno aims to accomplish. What we see is how unique, and how consistent, S'forno is throughout his *perush* in the many *parshiyos* he is tying together. To begin, S'forno returns to a common theme that he has developed before. What is Hashem aiming at, through the broad rainbow of *mitzvos* and sacred concepts that are the substance of the second half of Sefer Shmos and the first half of Sefer Vayikra? *Parashas* Kedoshim has come to finally reveal this. "Hashem has rested His Shechina amidst Yisrael (*a la* מתן תורה and הקמת המשכן)," he says, "and separated us from the *tum'ah* of certain foods, as well as that of *niddah*, *nega'im*, etc. (as mentioned in the last several *parshiyos*), and the *tum'ah* inherent in all חטא (*a la* the *avodah* of Yom Kippur in Acharei Mos, achieving מטהרת מכל חטאתיכם)". The purpose of all this? שהכוונה בכל אלה האזהרות היא שיהיו קדושים. All this was mandated so that the Jewish people could become holy, "kedoshim". Stepping aside from the more accepted *p'shat* of other rishonim (which sees Hashem saying: "Since I am Kadosh, so you ought to be..."), S'forno takes a path of his own. Hashem is plainly asking of His people: "Be kedoshim". Period. Knowing that this presents an immediate question (Just how are we mortals, very human people, to become kadosh?), Hashem answers by saying, "Be like Me, in intellect and in action." The very elaborate list He has already provided in the many *parshiyos* of the Torah prior to this one, provide the way. What is also interesting about S'forno's *p'shat* is that he understands there to be an intrinsic connection / a common definition of terms, between "kedusha" and "חיי עולם." Our eternal life (חיי עולם) is tied to our achievement in kedusha. The closer one has come to be like Hashem, so will be the nature, or the degree, of one's own eternity. He says (in 19:2) that the reward promised for *kibbud av va'em*, למען יאריכון ימיו, ought to be understood as a promise for everlasting life, not merely life on earth. But unlike other rishonim who see this reward listed in the Aseres HaDibros applying only to *kibbud av va'em*, S'forno sees it as defining the reward for ALL of the first five Dibros. In case one finds this odd, Rav Kupperman brings an example of this type of *p'shat* brought by the Ramban. He links the end of *parashas* Yisro to that of *parashas* Mishpatim. The last of the Aseres HaDibros is לא תחמד (do not covet). Ramban sees the purpose of providing the *mishpatim* at that particular place in the Torah to explain how a person can avoid the earlier mitzvah of לא תחמד. Similarly, here, S'forno links the eternal reward to be active, equally inherent in all of the first five commandments. All of Torah, the experience of Sinai, is to allow for Hashem's purpose in creating the universe, to create people who would be as much like Hashem as possible. In our *paresha*, S'forno says, it is made abundantly clear. Be Kadosh. That is the whole point of My creating everything. How? By following the *mitzvos* I have presented before you. Thereby, you come to join Me, Hashem, in eternal life.

FROM THE PEN OF RAV S.R. HIRSCH... By Rabbi Naftoly Katzenstein

שני שעירים - 2 goats are selected for the חטאת of Yom Kippur. They both stand פתח אהל מועד. A lottery was done by selecting 2 lots from the קלפי (pot), one in each hand of the Kohen, one for each goat. Each goat had the exact same possibility of becoming a חטאת לה' as it did לעזאזל. The goat is a strong-willed, determined animal, similar to Am Yisrael (עם קשה עורף). Each one of us is a שעיר. We have the power to resist and be obstinate. We can make a choice. Do we resist our internal and external temptations which lure us away from ה' and thereby become a שעיר לה'? Or, do we use our obstinacy against ה', and refuse to follow in his ways and resist subjugating ourselves to his Holy Laws of morality; turning us into a שעיר לעזאזל, and ending up in a wretched and empty מדבר? We each stand פתח אהל מועד with each and every daily decision we make. R' Hirsch urges us to resist the enticements that tear us away from becoming close to ה'. By doing so, we will be שכינה to enter into His אהל מועד and be close to his שכינה.

LESSONS FROM OUR GEDOLIM: R' Meir Chodosh was once hospitalized for a serious operation. His family and *Talmidim* were by his bedside day and night; though he was made to undergo a constant stream of tests, he always remained cheerful. Then a young resident entered to take some blood -- the Rov paled, looked worried, and requested that everyone leave the room. When the doctor had finished and the family came back, they were perplexed: why the concern over a simple blood test? "It wasn't the test, but the doctor," he explained. "He has difficulty finding a vein, and sometimes has to make several attempts. I was concerned that you might get upset at him if you saw him trying repeatedly, and I wanted to spare him the embarrassment..."