



# Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



## TIFERET UPDATES

### *This Week in Tiferet*

Lag BaOmer celebration in Tiferet began with a shiur by Mrs. Leba Schneider, on applying the lessons of Lag Baomer to our lives. ***(To hear an abridged version of Mrs. Schneider's shiur, visit our website, and click on "Torat Eretz Yisrael.")***

That night, we had our traditional Lag Baomer bonfire, after which many of our students journeyed to Meiron, to daven by the kever of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. Finally, our students spent the afternoon at the beautiful Ashdod beach, enjoying the warmth of Spring in Eretz Yisrael. Lag Baomer Sameach!

### תורת תפארת

#### Parshat Emor - The Bet Hamikdash Experience Rav Elie Mayer (ravmayer@gmail.com)

Individuals with disabilities have long derived inspiration and hope from the Rabbinic interpretation that Moshe's פה וכבוד לשון meant that Moshe Rabbeinu, the greatest prophet in our history, the man who spoke 'face to face' to G-d, overcame his disability to become a great orator. The message is that no matter what your physical disability, it will not hinder your spiritual ability.

That positive message is challenged in Parshat Emor. The Torah lists many physical limitations that invalidate a Kohen from serving in the Bet HaMikdash. The Parsha says: (ויקרא י"ח: כ"א) – Any man with a defect may not approach. The Torah then lists the blemishes that it refers to including, blind, lame, broken limbs, cataracts, etc.

As long as the Kohen can successfully perform his duties, why does G-d care if the Kohen has a מום? Furthermore, how does one teach Parshat Emor to someone with disabilities? What about the inspiring message of Moshe's spiritual heights despite his physical limitations?

The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim 3:45 suggests that this requirement is based on the superficial nature of man. We tend to judge people based on their external appearances. Therefore, to maintain the honor and prestige of the Bet Hamikdash, it is important that the Kohanim be in perfect physical health. Does the Rambam really understand the Torah to accept the failings of our nature and to cater to them - and in the Temple of G-d of all places! Shouldn't the Bet HaMikdash move us to focus on the deeper meaning and to teach us to see the inner beauty in all of G-d's creations?!

HaRav Mordechai Machlis, shlita teaches that the Bet HaMikdash is meant to be a microcosm of the world of perfection that will be. When you walked into the Temple you were given a glimpse into the future ideal existence that will be in Yemot HaMashiach.

The Mishna in the fifth chapter of Pirkei Avot teaches that there were ten miracles that took place in the Bet Hamikdash. Among them were that pregnant women didn't miscarry, the flesh of the korbanot didn't smell, there were no flies despite the slaughtering of the offerings, nobody was uncomfortable. The Bet Hamikdash represented a spiritual and physical utopia.

## "Pure Parenting" Atara Hagler

Parshat Emor starts with a פסוק that can teach us a very valuable lesson. "וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל – הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם לִנְפֹשׁ לֹא יִטְמָא בְּעַמִּיּוֹ Hashem said to Moshe: Say to the Kohanim, the sons of Aaron, and tell them no one may become impure from a dead person among his people..." Why does it use a double language, using the words "say" and "tell." Can you say something to a group of people without telling them?

Rashi answers this question by explaining that ה' commanded Moshe to tell the adult kohanim to teach their children the halachot that apply to a kohen. Chazal take this a step further, saying this is not only to teach us that a kohen must educate his children, but that all Jewish parents have an obligation to educate their children with the halachot that apply to them. Kohanim, levim and yisraelim are all obligated in this!

However, if ה' wanted us to learn this obligation why is it written here by טמא מת? Isn't there a more appropriate place we could learn this from? Why teach this near a mitzvah that only applies to a small percentage of בני ישראל? In this parsha we read of the mitzvot related to yamim tovim - why not extrapolate the obligation of chinuch from there?

Rav Yaakov Weinberg states that the above פסוק is actually the most appropriate place to give a parent the obligation of chinuch. A kohen has to parent his child in a specific manner. This is to assure that his child is not turned off to Judaism, since other Jewish kids (levim and yisraelim) can do things that a kohen may not. The most restrictive parents are those who receive the most complaints and rebellious acts from their children. In the times of the בית המקדש, the most restrictive parents were the kohanim and yet they succeeded in parenting. There is a lot we could learn from the parenting of kohanim. The kohanim were not restrictive to their children to be cruel, however they were simply aware of their childrens' special status as a kohen and wanted them to appreciate it!

Every Jewish parent can see the value in this. Simply educating a child in halacha and saying "this is אסור...that is not allowed" will not leave a good impression on a child. However, looking deeper with a child and explaining their special role in this world will truly excite them as they approach Torah and halacha! We can learn a similar idea in פרק כג פסוק טו when we read about counting the omer. The פסוק tells us "וּסְפַרְתֶּם – And you shall count yourselves." The Ramban learns out from this that each individual must count every one of the days separately and out loud. This is to excite us and mentally prepare us for the amazing holiday on which we received the Torah. When a parent educates a child using the lessons from the kohanim their child should be over joyed and excited for Shavuos and our receiving of the Torah. May we all merit to follow in the ways of the kohanim and the ways in which they educated their children!



## תורת תפארת (המשך)

In the final Geula, the blind will be able to see, the lame will be able to walk and people will not suffer from physical disabilities. The Bet Hamikdash would have given every visitor inspiration and hope that there will be a time without physical suffering as prophesied by our Neviim. Therefore, a Kohen with a physical disability would detract from that vision.

Perhaps that is the rationale for a Kohen being prohibited from any contact with the dead. In Yemot HaMashiach, death will be abolished. Since a Kohen represents a vision of the future where there will be no death, he may not have contact with death.

One of the objectives of the Torah Jew is to elevate the mundane to holiness, as we say in Kedusha, 'נִקְדַּשׁ אֶת – שמך בעולם'. We are a מַמְלַכַת כְּהֵנִים - a nation of Kohanim. It is our imperative to live our lives in the same way as the Kohanim, who inspired visitors in the Bet Hamikdash. Additionally, Chazal speak of the Jewish home as a miniature Bet Hamikdash. Just as the Bet Hamikdash was a place of inspiration and a glimpse at a better world, so too our homes need to be a place that visitors will leave both elevated and motivated to build a miniature Bet Hamikdash of their own.

May we merit to be inspired by the Kohanim in the third and final Bet HaMikdash.