

יוצא לאור כל עש"ק ע"י תלמידי ישיבת בית המדרש לתורה  
לעילוי נשמות מאיר ב"ר אליהו שמשון ומחלה ב"ר שמואל סטקר ויהודה לייב ב"ר יעקב ושרה לאה ב"ר שמואל קליין  
נדבת בניהם אלעזר ואיטה סטקר

## A SENSITIVE QUESTION

"וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲמַר אֶל  
הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן...לִנְפֹשׁ לֹא יִטְמָא  
וַיִּקְרָא כ"א:א'  
"And God said to Moshe: 'Say  
to the Kohanim, the sons of  
Aharon...for a dead person he  
shall not become impure among  
his people.'" Vayikra 21:1

Gadol, picked up the head of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel and cried out bitterly and lamented, "Oh, how can it be that this tongue which was so skilled in the precepts of the Torah must now lick the dirt!" We can ask, however, how Rabbi Yishmael, who was the Kohen Gadol, could allow himself to come into direct contact with the dead?

This question was presented to **Rabbi Tzvi Pesach Frank** (1873-1961), the Chief Rabbi of Yerushalayim, as part of a discussion regarding another case. The wife of a certain Kohen had died, and the halachah is that the Kohen is allowed, and even required, to participate in her funeral. When he was brought to the funeral home, however, another deceased person was also brought into the facility to be taken care of. Now, although the Kohen certainly was allowed to defile himself for the sake of his wife, he had no reason to become exposed to the ritual impurities of the other person who had died, who was not his relative. Was this man permitted to be in that funeral home to fulfill the mitzvah of taking care of the burial needs of his wife?

*When he was brought to the funeral home, another deceased person was also brought into the facility to be taken care of.*

HaRav Frank answered that since this Kohen was already going to become impure, and being in the building would not expose him to any further level of tum'ah, he was allowed to enter. However, he was warned that when his wife was taken out, he should be careful to leave the building first. If he would allow her body to be removed before his leaving, for that moment he would be in the building and exposed to the tum'ah of the other deceased person without the excuse of being there for his wife.

We can use this same approach to explain the actions of Rabbi Yishmael. Rabbi Yishmael was already in the building together with Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel who was killed. Once he was already exposed to the defilement of the dead, there was no additional level of tum'ah to which he was exposed by now picking up the head.

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## STRONG LEADERSHIP

"כִּי יָזַר שָׁמֶן מִשְׁחַת אֶלְקִינוּ עָלָיו  
אֲנִי ה'" וַיִּקְרָא כ"א:ב'

"For a crown, the oil of his  
God's anointment, is upon  
him; I am God." Vayikra 21:12

Jew that this unique group of people was selected over everyone to become Hashem's legion, His faithful servants. They must have questioned this phenomenon. What really is the reason that only the Kohanim and the Levi'im could act as agents for the people to offer korbanos? What trait rendered them so special?

Bnei Yisrael would come to the Beis HaMikdash to see the Kohanim performing the Avodah, accompanied by the Levi'im chanting their melodies and Psalms. Only one tribe had access to the internal workings of the Beis HaMikdash. It might have troubled the average

**Pninin al HaTorah** cites **HaRav Y. A. Hirshovitz**, who attributes the distinction of the Kohanim to their grandfather, Aharon HaKohen. He stood up against those who would raise a hand against Toras Hashem, against those who chose to replace divinity with a Golden Calf. They compounded their sin by flaunting it, dancing and reveling before it. Aharon made an altar, proclaiming (Shemos 32:5): "There will be a holiday for Hashem tomorrow." Bnei Yisrael, however, thought in different terms than Aharon. They thought that they would celebrate the worship of their man-made idol. But Aharon was referring to the following day when the Golden Calf

would be ground to dust and the perpetrators who clung to it would be executed. There truly was a festival for Hashem - the Almighty's name was affirmed and sanctified.

Aharon represented the central point where people who feared and believed in Hashem would rally together. Yes, Aharon withstood the onslaught of rebellion. He stemmed the tide of assimilation. Those who created the incursion, who incited the people to idol worship, were put to death. Aharon's sanctuary of kedusha endured to serve as a bastion of inspiration to the people.

Whenever our people have been faced with spiritual and physical challenge, the Torah has infused them with the strength to triumph over adversity. We have been guided by the memory of that first Kohen - Aharon - who stood his ground and encouraged the people with "חג לה' מחר" - "There will be a holiday for Hashem tomorrow." Keep the faith and remain strong, for tomorrow we will celebrate as we triumph over those who would defeat us. Let us look to the Kohen of our generation, the spiritual giants who guide us, to inspire us to develop the courage to overcome both the internal and external challenges which face us.

*Whenever faced with spiritual and physical challenge, the Torah has infused us with the strength to triumph over adversity.*

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### THE COUNT IS FOR US

וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמָּחָר הַשַּׁבָּת  
מִיּוֹם הַבִּיאְכֶם אֶת עֹמֶר הַתַּנּוּכָה  
שִׁבְעַת שָׁבוּעוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה  
וַיִּקְרָא כ"ג:ט"ו

"And you shall count for yourselves, from the morrow of the rest day, from the day when you bring the Omer of the Waving, seven weeks, they shall be complete." Vayikra 23:15

The emphasis that the counting of the Omer must be "for you" has to be explained. The verse could just as well have stated that we must "count, beginning the day after the first day of Yom Tov". Furthermore, why is it that the Torah instructs us to count from the second day of Pesach, and not from the first day of Pesach? The counting is from Pesach until Shavuot, so it would seem appropriate for the counting to start immediately from the beginning of the holiday, and not to wait until the first day is over.

**Or HaChaim** points out that the word "לָכֶם - for you" - indicates that the counting is for our benefit, for the welfare of the Jewish people. From Hashem's standpoint, כביכול, the Torah could have been given immediately upon our departure from Egypt, without any delay. However, the Jews were not yet ready. They were still under the influence of the impurities of Egypt, its decadence and depravity. It would have been simply impossible to enter into a covenant of devotion and spiritual ascent while still steeped in the shackles of the Egyptian immorality. Therefore, the counting of the Omer was for the sake of the Jewish people, who then utilized it to prepare themselves, day by day, to grow in spirituality and holiness.

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This answer also provides an insight as to why the first day of Pesach itself is not part of the count. The fifteenth of Nisan, the day of the departure, was spent partially in Egypt itself, until the nation left in the early morning. Accordingly, this day is not one which can be part of the days of the pursuit of holiness. Only once the Jews left Egypt could they then begin to mark the days of distancing themselves physically and psychologically from the corruptive aspects of the Egyptian exile.

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### THE HISTORICAL OBSERVANCE OF SUKKOS

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר  
בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ  
הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת שִׁבְעַת  
יָמִים לֵה' וַיִּקְרָא כ"ג:ל"ד

"Speak to Bnei Yisrael, saying: 'On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of Sukkos, a seven-day period for God.'"

Vayikra 23:34

In his **Sefer Ohr Torah**, **Rabbi Menachem Tsvi Taskin** explains that the mitzvah to sit in a sukkah on Sukkos is specifically described as being a commemoration of the protection afforded our ancestors as they travelled through the desert (Verse 43). Accordingly, during the forty years that the Jews spent in the desert there was no need for this symbolic dwelling in order to remember the miraculous clouds of glory which surrounded them, for the miracle itself was in progress. Furthermore, the mitzvah of taking the four

species was also apparently not performed for those forty years. The verse connects the taking of these species with the arrival of the nation into the land, as it says (Verse 39), "As you gather the yield of the land...you shall take...a beautiful fruit...etc."

This approach can help understand the seemingly redundant wording of the verses in the description of the holiday of Sukkos. The paragraph opens (v. 33-36) with Moshe commanding the people to celebrate the festival of Sukkos in the seventh month. However, the nature of the observance is simply described as one where the first and eighth days are to be days

*They, in fact, did not take the four species, nor did they dwell in the sukkah.*

when work is prohibited. Only later (in Verses 39-43) does the Torah once again begin the description of the holiday, but here adds the observance of the festival rituals – the taking of the four species and the dwelling in the sukkah. What is the meaning of this repetition?

We can say that Moshe began by addressing the Jews at that time, as they had not yet entered the land. They, in fact, did not take the four species, nor did they dwell in the sukkah. The later verses, however, deal with the nature of the holiday as it would apply to future generations. Here, the additional mitzvos are an integral part of the holiday of Sukkos.

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#### CASE - LAW REVIEW

וְנִקְבַּ שֵׁם ה' מוֹת יוֹמֶת רָגוּם יִרְגְּמוּ  
בּוֹ כָּל הָעֵדָה בְּגֵר כְּאֶזְרָח בְּנִקְבוֹ שֵׁם  
יוֹמֶת" וַיִּקְרָא כ"ד:ט"ז

“And one who pronounces blasphemously the name of God shall be put to death; the entire assembly shall surely pelt him with stones; proselyte and native alike, when he blasphemes the Name, he shall be put to death.”

Vayikra 24:16

blasphemer of God's name (Vayikra 24); 3. זִלְפַּחַד - Tzlapchad and the inheritance of his portion for his daughters (BeMidbar 27); 4. פֶּסַח שְׁנִי - the offering of Pesach Sheni (BeMidbar 9); 5. כְּזָבִי - the debacle of Zimri taking the gentile princess Kozbi (BeMidbar 25).

The first letters of these episodes spell out the acrostic מנצפ"ך. The Gemara (Shabbos 104) tells us that מנצפ"ך were instructed to us by the prophets. On a simple level, this Gemara is telling us that there are five letters of the Alef-Bais which have a different form when they occur at the end of a word as opposed to anywhere else in a word. The fact that the letters מנצפ"ך change their form at the end of a word is taught to us by the prophets.

We can now also say that these five episodes, indicated by the five-letter acrostic מנצפ"ך, were taught to us in response to actual cases that happened, and due to the prophet (i.e. Moshe) providing the law in each case, rather than being instructed to us directly as were the other laws in the Torah.

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#### LEARNING A LESSON

שֶׁבֶר תַּחַת שֶׁבֶר עֵין תַּחַת עֵין שֵׁן  
תַּחַת שֵׁן כְּאֶשֶׁר יִתֵּן מוֹם בְּאֶדָם כֵּן  
יִתֵּן בּוֹ" וַיִּקְרָא כ"ד:כ"

“Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he maimed a person, so shall it be rendered to him.”

Vayikra 24:20

Any act which has a severe punishment associated with it is obviously considered to be an abhorrent crime against society and/or against God. An act which is punishable with lashes is not so severe as one which is deserving of excision or death. Consequently, our attitude towards the crimes with more severe punishments should then be one of greater repulsion and disgust. Murder, for example, is deserving of capital punishment. This information in and of itself teaches us that the Torah values life as a supreme entity, and the very thought of taking another's life should be inconceivable. Accordingly, there are various unusual scenarios in the Torah depicting situations which will almost never exist. One of these is the case of the rebellious and recalcitrant son (Devarim 21:18). Another is that of the wayward city (Devarim 13:13). Nevertheless, the point is that by studying them and their prescribed punishments, we can develop a value system, and an entire perspective upon life and its priorities can be established.

When the Torah describes the restitution due to one who has been injured, it uses a very sharp and dramatic terminology - “an eye for an eye”. Although the Oral Law clearly and unequivocally defines this term as referring to monetary payment, the point of the Torah using such language is in order to

The law of the pronouncing of the name of God to curse it appears here due to an actual episode which occurred. **Chachmei HaEmes** notes that there are a handful of laws which appear in the Torah at their various locations, each being presented as a response to an actual case which took place. The question arose as to how to deal with the circumstances at hand, and after it was clarified, the Torah states the halachah for all generations. These are 1. מְקוֹשֵׁשׁ - the Shabbos desecration of the one who chopped wood (BeMidbar 15); 2. נִקְבַּ שֵׁם ה' - the

*These five episodes, indicated by the five letter acrostic מנצפ"ך, were taught to us in response to actual cases that happened.*

**Chazon Ish (Kovetz Igaros 3:102)** writes that a careful analysis of the laws of the Torah can train a person to conduct himself in an exemplary manner and can lead one to perfect his character. As we study the Torah's system of justice, we notice that the nature of the various punishments is equitably ascribed to particular offenses.

*By studying them and their prescribed punishments, we can develop a value system, and an entire perspective upon life and its priorities can be established.*

demonstrate a serious degree of importance. The Torah intentionally draws on our emotions and evokes a sensitivity which describes the negligence that leads to human injury as being loathsome.

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## Halachic Corner

### Pesach Sheni Pirkei Avos Ch. 4

Zmanim for Parashas Emor 5780

	Krias Shma - Sat.	Tefila - Sat.	Sunset	Sunrise	Sunset
According to the Gaon of Vilna	9:12	10:24	Friday	Sat.	Sat.
According to the Magen Avraham	8:36	10:00	7:56	5:37	7:57

During the days between Pesach and Shavuot, 24,000 of the talmidim of Rabbi Akiva died (Yevamos 62b). It is for this reason that we are accustomed to take upon ourselves various forms of mourning during this period. (See Shulchan Aruch O.C. 493:1) On the 33rd day of the Omer the deaths of the students ceased. We therefore have a custom not to fast on that day, nor do we say Tachanun during Minchah on the 32nd day and on Lag B'Omer. Additionally, we may once again start cutting hair and shaving on the day of the 33rd day of the Omer. One should also increase his joy somewhat (ibid. ס"ב). Even though the period of mourning ends on Lag B'Omer, one must continue to mourn at least through the night of Lag B'Omer, and should not begin to shave, get a haircut, or listen to live music until the morning of Lag B'Omer.

Halachic Corner is dedicated by Benyomin Freeman in memory of his father Gedalia Freeman, זצ"ל, ברוך גדליה לייב בן הירש מוטעל, זצ"ל. May his memory be for a blessing.

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## Questions for Thought and Study

- How is it the responsibility of all Bnei Yisrael to make sure that a Kohen remains holy? See Ohr HaChaim 21:8
- Which feature of the face is considered "הַדָּרָת פָּנִים" ("glory of the face")? See Ramban 21:18
- Why does the parashah concerning the purification of a Kohen come right after the section concerning blemishes that disqualify a Kohen? See Ibn Ezra 22:2
- Why does an animal have to be at least in its eighth day before being brought as a קָרְבָּן (sacrifice)? See Ba'al HaTurim 22:27
- Which words indicate that every individual is required to count Sefirah and it is not a communal obligation? See Tosfos Menachos 65
- Why are the gifts to the poor – פָּאָה (corner) and לֶקֶט (gleanings) – mentioned after the commandment to bring the Omer offering? See Ohr HaChaim 23:22

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## This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

● By בית המדרש לתורה - Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to Rabbi Eliezer & Dr. Malkie Eisenberg on the birth of a grandson, born to Moish & Hadassah Eisenberg; to Dr. Sam & Rita Lipshitz and Moshe & Doreen Mermelstein on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Cobi Mermelstein; to HTC Board of Regents member Rabbi Yaakov Rajchenbach and his wife Judy on the birth of a grandson, born to Rabbi Moshe & Sarala Rajchenbach; and to Beis Midrash talmid Davy Isenberg on his engagement to Rochel Doerfer; and extending heartfelt condolences to HTC Board of Regents member Rabbi Bernard Neuman and his wife Miriam on the loss of their brother-in-law, Norman Fredman, ז"ל.

● Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro is not meeting in the restaurant, so we are bringing Torah to you. Please join Rabbi Moshe Shechter over Zoom on Thursday, May 14, at 12:30 PM. Topic: "Rus: The Mother of the Moshiah Dynasty". Zoom info will be emailed and posted on HTC's facebook page.

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● By בית המדרש לתורה - Hebrew Theological College announcing that Rosh HaYeshiva Rabbi Avraham Friedman's Sunday morning Gemara Shiur, studying Makkos 2a, will meet 9:15-10:15 AM. Zoom 6204846937.

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•We are blessed to live in a very special Jewish community. One of the unique features is how our Jewish Federation (JUF) embodies the obligation of kol Yisrael arevim zeh ba'zeh. This week a JUF committee I'm privileged to sit on made additional, emergency allocations to many critical groups – with no strings attached other than that the funds are only to be used to directly help those most in need. - Eric Rothner.

•Among the allocations: \$250K in food assistance for Agudath Israel (\$50K, Kiwi Kids), Chicago Chesed Fund (\$100K), Chicago Center for Torah (\$50K), Chicago Mitzvah Campaign (\$50K). \$488K for emergency cash to help families with food, prescriptions, rent & utility payments (via CJE, JCFS, The Ark, Maot Chitim, Ezra & Shalva). \$371K was dispatched to help our brothers and sisters in Israel, Europe & Russia. These are uncertain times. What is certain is that together, as a community, we are all stronger. Thanks JUF.

•Celebrate Yom Yerushalayim, Thursday night, May 21, with Mizrahi - Religious Zionists of Chicago. Video webcast – details to follow. Youth Art Contest winners announced. For sponsorship opportunities, please visit [ym.rzc.us](http://ym.rzc.us); email [office@rzc.us](mailto:office@rzc.us); or call 847-674-9733 x2.

•Calling All Students - Elementary through High School: Enter the Mizrahi - Religious Zionists of Chicago Yom Yerushalayim 5780 Art Contest, sponsored in memory of Howard D. Geller z"l and Sheldon Robinson z"l. Three divisions: Grades 3-5; 6-8; 9-12. First place prizes range from \$100 to \$200. Deadline is Monday, May 18. Awards announced at the RZC Yom Yerushalayim Celebration Video webcast, Thursday night, May 21. For full contest rules and entry form, visit: [artcontest.rzc.us](http://artcontest.rzc.us).

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•Linda's Headquarters in Skokie will be open for private appointments. Come see our beautiful new wigs and hats, all on sale. Please call Linda at 773-704-8311 for an appointment.

•In honor of our dear grandson, Yitz Goldstein, on his Zoom Bar Mitzvah. Mazal tov to his parents, Batsheva & Eli Goldstein, to his siblings, Rebecca and Abie Goldstein, and to grandparents, Saul & Kate Goldstein, and to their entire family. - From Rozzi & George Bornstein, Matt & Ilana Bornstein and family, Bini & Adam Dachs and family, and Daniel & Leora Bornstein and family.

•By the Buckman and Spindel families thanking the community for the outpouring of condolences and support during our Shiva for our dear mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother, Ethel Buckman, ע"ה. She left a wonderful legacy for her family. May her memory be for a blessing.

•By Carole & Moish Parsoff, Marcy & Ken Weingarten and family, Nancy & David Yudkowsky and family, Emily, Noam and Lavi Wallick, Miles & Abby Wolmark, and Debra & Yossi Schenker and family, in memory of their beloved father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather, David Parsoff, ע"ה, דוד בן זאב, on the occasion of his yahrtzeit on 19 Iyar. May his memory be for a blessing.

•By Esther Cardash; Aaron & Debbie Cardash and family; Berish & Shelley Cardash and family; Dina & Marc Romanoff and family, Feigy & Moshe Schwartz and family; Chana & Chuly Stern and family, Yael & Zevi Farkas and family, Yehudah & Esti Romanoff and family, Simmie & Yosef Hildeshaim, and all the younger grandchildren and great-grandchildren, in memory of their husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Rabbi Dr. Yehuda Cardash, ז"ל, הרב יהודה בן ליטמאן, on his yahrtzeit on 17 אייר ט"ז.

•By Terry Socol, Andrea, Phil Levin and family, and Roselle & Phil Zaret and family in loving memory of our dear mother and grandmother, Charlotte Socol, ע"ה, on the occasion of her seventeenth yahrtzeit on the 16th of Iyar. We miss her very much. May her memory be for a blessing.

•By the family of Rebbetzin Helen Davis on the occasion of her eighth yahrtzeit on 21 Iyar. May her legacy of Torah, chesed, ma'asim tovim and ahavat Yisroel serve as a continuing model for her loving children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. - The Shanes, Davis, and Rhein Families.

Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les & Ethel Sutker in loving memory of

Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein, ע"ה. May their memory be for a blessing.

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Answers:

1. The term "וְקִדְשְׁתּוֹ" ("and you shall sanctify him") written in singular form indicates that it is the responsibility of the courts to punish the Kohen (with lashes) until he divorces his wife who is forbidden to him.
2. Regarding the blemishes of a Kohen, the word "תָּרַם" – "sunken" or "disfigurement of the nose" (see Berachos 34b) – is used. The nose is considered the "הֶדְרַת פָּנִים" of a face, so when it is disfigured it is considered to be "destroyed", another term described as תָּרַם.
3. The connection is to show that even though a blemished Kohen may eat from the gifts given to him, he must be pure (קָהוֹר) when doing so.
4. If the animal is sacrificed on any of its first seven days, it will appear as if the person is sacrificing to one of the items created during the first days of Creation (e.g. the sun, the moon, etc.). By sacrificing the animal on the eighth day, one indicates that the sacrifice is completely to Hashem.
5. The plural form of the words "וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם" ("and you shall count for yourselves") speaks collectively to each and every individual. If it was a communal obligation, the Torah would have said "וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָךְ".
6. One might think that since the first harvest is brought as an offering, the gifts to the poor would not need to be separated. The Torah mentions them here to indicate that this is not the case.

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Prepared by Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand, Editor, and Mrs. Naomi Samber, Managing Editor

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