

# Parshat Emor

The Parsha begins by telling us that a *kohen* must always be careful to remain *tahor*, pure, so that he can serve in the Holy Temple. In order to do this, he must make sure not to come in contact with a dead body because that would make him impure. He is only allowed to become impure by going to a funeral or cemetery if a close relative of his passes away. That means his father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or unmarried sister. A *kohen* is also not allowed to marry somebody who was married before and got divorced.

The *kohen gadol*--the "high priest" or "head *kohen*," is *never* allowed to become impure, even if a close relative passes away. Also, he's not allowed to marry anybody who was married before at all.

When an animal (a cow, sheep, or goat) gives birth (to a calf, lamb, or kid) nobody is allowed to take the newborn away for seven days. Also, an animal and its offspring may not be killed on the same day.

## The Jewish Calendar

The Torah then tells us about the special times of year on the Jewish calendar

First it discusses Shabbat. For six days we do work and the seventh is a day of rest.

Next is Passover, in the Hebrew month of Nissan. For seven days we eat matzot, and the first and last of those days are days of rest on which we're not allowed to do any work.

Next is the Counting of the Omer, which begins on Passover and counts down until Shavuot.

The fiftieth day of the Omer is the festival of Shavuot.

Next comes Rosh Hashanah, the "head of the year" on the first day of Tishrei. This is when we blow the *shofar*.

Ten days later is the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, a fast day when we pray for forgiveness for our sins.

Next is Sukkot, a joyful festival when we eat in a booth called a *sukkah* and make a blessing on four types of plants gathered together.

The Parsha ends by telling us about somebody who cursed G-d. Moses asked G-d what his punishment should be and G-d said that he must be killed. We also read that somebody who kills a person is punished with death and that somebody who hurts a person or animal must pay money to compensate for the cost.