Points to Ponder

Emor 5782

**אֱמֹ֥ר אֶל־הַכֹּֽהֲנִ֖ים בְּנֵ֣י אַֽהֲרֹ֑ן וְאָֽמַרְתָּ֣ אֲלֵהֶ֔ם Speak to the Kohanim sons of Aharon and say onto them (21:1)** - Why is there a double language of Emor and V’Amarta? **Rashi** explains that it adds the extra responsibility to the older ones to teach the younger ones. But why is this lesson being taught here? **Rav Moshe Sternbuch Shlita** explained that when it comes to matters of Kedusha one tends to think that these levels and rules only apply to adults. Hence the Torah teaches us that it is incumbent upon us to teach our young that they should also learn about Kedusha and strive to implement its values and level at even the youngest of ages.

**כִּ֚י אִם־לִשְׁאֵר֔וֹ הַקָּרֹ֖ב אֵלָ֑יו  Except for his wife (21:2)** - Why is the Kohein’s wife the first one listed as one of the relatives he must become Tamai for? **Rav Zalman Sorotzkin ztl.** explains that all of a Kohein’s relatives from his youth (his parents, siblings) are all part of his past. The relationship with his wife, however, is one of the future, of potential. While we build our future on the foundation of the past, and likely still have relationships with those people of the past, the future with one’s wife is a dream and vision of hope, and therefore takes precedent as the most important.

**אֹת֣וֹ וְאֶת־בְּנ֔וֹ לֹ֥א תִשְׁחֲט֖וּ בְּי֥וֹם אֶחָֽד It and its offspring shall not be slaughtered on the same day (22:28)** – Why is this Mitzvah listed near the section that deals with the laws of Yom Tov? **Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl Shlita** noted that the Gemara (Chullin 83a) identified 4 times that one needs to be informed when the mother was sold. All of them are around Yamim Tovim when people tend to buy more meat and the potential of violating this Torah prohibition is high. Rav Nebenzahl adds that these times need an extra layer of protection for this Mitzva and thus it was juxtaposed to the laws of Yom Tov.

**שֶׁ֥בַע שַׁבָּת֖וֹת תְּמִימֹ֥ת תִּֽהְיֶֽינָה They shall be complete (23:15) – Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that it is only here in Parshas Emor where the count of Sefirah is in days not weeks, that we speak of Temimos as opposed to Parshas Re’eh where we talk about 7 weeks. Why? **Rav Schachter quoted Rav Soloveitchik** who explained that there are 2 different aspects of counting Sefirah – that of the individual and that of the community. The individual count needs to be Tamim (complete) while that of the community does not. Thus, if one did not count at night, according to the Behag, s/he counts without a Beracha during the day since the individual Mitzva passed and that which remains is the communal one – to establish Shavuos.

**וַיֵּצֵא֙ בֶּן־אִשָּׁ֣ה יִשְׂרְאֵלִ֔ית וְהוּא֙ בֶּן־אִ֣ישׁ מִצְרִ֔י And the son of a Jewish woman went out (24:10)** - **Rashi** notes that the connection between the episode of the Mekallel and the Parsha of the Lechem Hapanim is in the fact that the unnamed individual here criticized the fact that the Lechem Hapanim is eaten cold and stale after so many days. Another Jew rebuked him for his harsh disrespect and he cursed Hashem as a result. Why did he care if the Lechem Hapanim is eaten warm or cold? **Rav Berel Wein Shlita** suggested that the point that irked him was whether this Lechem was Chametz or Matzah. If it were baked each day, then it could be served warm and fresh as chametz. However, if it were baked then left to rest for at least seven days, it would most certainly have to be non- chametz. However, the constant reminder of his forebears and their shortcomings was too much “in his face” for him to handle. It set him off and caused this terrible episode. The Gemara in Bava Metzia (59b) says that if someone has a family member who was once hanged, you cannot even use the word "hang" in an innocuous manner, lest you bring him shame.

**שֵׁ֥ם אִמּ֛וֹ שְׁלֹמִ֥ית בַּת־דִּבְרִ֖י לְמַטֵּה־דָֽן His mother’s name was Shlomis Bas Divree (24:11)** - Why do we note his mother’s name if we leave his name out? **Rav Daniel Yolkut Shlita** suggested that the Torah is highlighting the role a mother plays in the Kedusha of family life. A mother can create an atmosphere of kedusha in everyday life— or can inject a cynicism to the potential for kedusha. **Rashi and the Ibn Ezra** both suggest that his blasphemy was about the korbanos— perhaps a lack of sensitivity for kedusha comes from Shelomit, who failed to build a home that was a Mikdash like Sara's. Parents and grandparents need to be sensitive to the degree to which the messages they give children can create the proper atmosphere or subtly poison the waters.

**וְאִ֕ישׁ כִּ֥י יַכֶּ֖ה כָּל־נֶ֣פֶשׁ אָדָ֑ם And when a man hits another person he shall be put to death (24:19)** - Moshe just asked about the Mikallel, why does Hashem give him all of the rules of someone who hits someone else here? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explained that Hashem wanted to teach that before anyone executes capital punishment out of love of Hashem, he must have Ahavas Yisrael. These Halachos show not only how much Hashem values human life, but also the sensitivity to human suffering and even loss of money.

Haftara:

**וְהָֽאַלְמָנָה֙ אֲשֶׁר תִּֽהְיֶ֣ה אַלְמָנָ֔ה מִכֹּהֵ֖ן יִקָּֽחוּ A widow who is the widow of a Kohein he shall take (Yechezkel 44:22) – Rashi** notes that this refers to the Kohein Gadol. **Abarbanel** and **Malbim** disagree arguing that in the future the Kohanim will not be able to marry widows like the Kohein Gadol cannot. The difference between them and the Kohein Gadol will be that they can marry a Kohein’s widow. **Rav Gideon Weitzman Shlita** explained that as active teachers of the Jewish people, the Kohanim need to achieve a higher level of Kedusha and thus they will have a stronger limit in order to be in a better position to teach the people how to properly sanctify their lives.