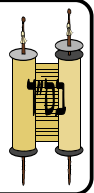




Kinder Torah

Parashas Emor



The Glory of Gratitude

"How are these days of Sefiras HaOmer going for you, Chaim?"

"Fine, Avi. I am counting each day. I haven't missed a day so far."

"That's great, Chaim."

"Is there a deeper meaning to your question, Avi?"

"As a matter of fact, there is Chaim. Only because there is a deeper meaning to Sefiras HaOmer. This is a period of time when we work on ourselves to improve our *middos* (character traits). This is both a preparation for Kaballas HaTorah on Shavuot and a foundation for the entire year. Hashem gives tremendous *Siyata Di'Shmaya* (Heavenly Assistance) during this time because He wants us to succeed. So you see that I was really asking you a question about a very deep and important subject Chaim."

"Yes. Please tell me, Avi, which *middos* should I be working on?"

"Rav Shimshon Pincus zt"l has a plan – a different middah each week. The first week we worked on *chesed* (kindness). The second week was *gevura* (self control). *Tiferes* (being occupied with beautiful things - mitzvos) followed *gevura*. Last week we made big efforts in *netzach* (turning our good ideas into actions.) The *middah* for this week is '*hod*.'"

"It sounds like a glorious subject, Avi."

"It is, Chaim. The literal meaning of *hod* is glory or splendor. Rav Pincus explains that our job this week is to become a glorious person – a living, walking expression of Hashem's splendor. The third week was *tiferes* – to be constantly involved with beautiful things, namely, Hashem's mitzvos. *Hod* is a deepening of that. *Hod* means that he internalizes it and becomes a beautiful person. His very actions bespeak the glory of The Almighty."

"Wow. That sounds like a tall order."

"It is, however we can focus on one aspect of *hod*. The word '*hod*' is related to the word '*lihodos*' to thank or express gratitude. The sefer *Usfartem Lachem Hakatzar* describes our *avodah* (work) for this week as thanking and praising The Creator with deep, pure gratitude. We should have no ulterior motives other than subjugating ourselves completely to the Glory of His Kingship."

"That is also a tall order, Chaim."

"It is, however, we can break it down into small, practical steps. The Amidah prayers contain a blessing of gratitude – '*Modim anachnu Lach* (we thank You.)' Before we begin reciting this blessing, we should pause for a moment and contemplate all of the good things that Hashem has done for us. The most obvious one is that we have the *zechus* (merit) to stand before Him in prayer! Only after we feel a deep gratitude in our hearts should we bow before Him and say the word '*Modim*.'"

"That is beautiful."

"We should also increase our appreciation of *talmidei chachomim* by standing before them, attempting to learn as much as we can from them, and properly honoring them."

"Hashem's mitzvos also deserve honor. There are many ways to perform a mitzvah. One can rush through the mitzvah, barely thinking about what he is doing. He may not even know the *halachos* pertaining to the mitzvah. A person can spend little or no money on a mitzvah. On the other hand, he can take the time and effort to properly learn about the mitzvah. He can then spend the money necessary to beautify the mitzvah. Finally, he can perform the mitzvah very carefully and deliberately, with all of the proper intentions. He does it in the nicest possible way. What a beautiful mitzvah! What a glory to Hashem!"

"*Hodu LaShem ki tov!* You have given us this week of *hod*!"



Kinderlach . . .

Hod is the week of glory. We glorify Hashem. How? By becoming glorious people ourselves. We express our gratitude to Him for what He has done and continues to do for us. We appreciate and honor the wise people who teach and guide us. We also cherish and honor Hashem's wonderful mitzvos by performing them in the most careful and beautiful way possible. In doing so we become a living example of Hashem's glory in this world. Thank you Hashem for giving us the honor and privilege of glorifying you!

The Shabbos Meal

"These are My appointed festivals . . . the seventh day is a day of complete rest . . . you shall not do any work; it is Shabbos for Hashem" (Vayikra 23:2-3). Rav Pincus quotes the Zohar which asks the following question. Hashem gave a blessing to the Shabbos day, as it says, "Hashem blessed the seventh day" (Bereshis 2:3). Blessing refers to sustenance. Yet we all know that during the forty years in the desert, no *mun* fell on Shabbos. If there was no food on Shabbos, where was the blessing? The question can be answered with a parable.

A mother once sent her child to the store to buy bread and milk. The little girl arrived and found the store closed; yet inside the locked doors, she saw a lot of activity. "Why is the store closed?" she asked the owner. "Young lady, today we received our weekly shipment from the supplier. We are unloading it and putting it on the shelves, so that we will have plenty of food to sell during the rest of the week." The analogy is apparent. Dur-

ing the six days of the week, we are taking from the storehouse. Shabbos is the day that the storehouse is replenished. That is why no *mun* fell on Shabbos, the day of loading the storehouse.

The Zohar continues to say that a person who believes in Hashem should set his table on Shabbos, put food on the table, and eat a meal. This will enable him to receive Hashem's blessings all six days. What is the connection between eating a meal and receiving a blessing? Eating is our most basic connection to Hashem. When a person eats, he physically feels attached to Hashem. Before the meal, he is hungry, tired, and weak. As he eats, he digests the food and instantaneously absorbs life energy. One who realizes that the food comes from Hashem understands that he is absorbing life from Hashem. When he is eating with the proper *kavannah* (intention) he realizes that Hashem is the One who is giving him life. Therefore, we must eat a meal on Shabbos. We must get close to Hashem in the most basic way, by eating, at the time when the blessings are coming from Heaven, on Shabbos.

Kinderlach . . .

Right now, you are eating Imma's delicious Shabbos meal. Yum. Thank you Imma. She is not the only one to thank. Imma brought the food from the store, which got it from the farm, which got it from Hashem. When you eat, your tummy gets full, you have energy, and you feel good. That is all from Hashem. If you think of Hashem when you are eating your Shabbos meal, you will get close to Him. He wants to be close to you. If you catch Him at the time of bracha, on Shabbos, then He will open His storehouses and give you all of His blessings.

Parasha Questions:

- Which types of deformities disqualify a *kohen* from the *avodah*? (21:17-21 and Rashi)
- What is the punishment for a *kohen* who is *tomei* while performing the *avodah*? (22:3)
- Who may and may not eat *trumah*? (22:10-13 and Rashi)
- Why is Shabbos mentioned in the list of *moedim* (holidays)? (Rashi 23:3)



Kinder Torah © Copyright 2007 ♦ All rights reserved to the author Simcha Groffman ♦ P.O.B. 5338, Jlm, 91052, Israel ♦ Tel: (02) 585-2216

Kinder Torah is distributed each week in Ashkelon, Bat Yam, Bayit Vegan, Beit Yisrael, Beitar, Bnei Brak, Cleveland, Detroit, Efrat, Ezras Torah, Geula, Givat Shaul, Givat Ze'ev, Gonen, Gush Shimonim, Haifa, Har Nof, Ilford, Istanbul, Izmir, Johannesburg, Kfar HaRif, Kiryat Sefer, Kosel Maaravi, Los Angeles, Maale Amos, Maalot Dafna, Machane Yehuda, Manchester, Mittersdorf, Mattisyahu, Modin, Neve Yaakov, North Miami Beach, Peduel, Philadelphia, Psagot, Ramat Shlomo, Ramot, Rechovot, Rommema, San Simone, Sanhedria HaMurchevet, Telz Stone, Toronto, Unsdorf, Yishuv Eli, Zichron Yaakov and other cities. Subscribe for yourself or sponsor your shul. Just 120¢ per year. All contributions are deductible from Maaser Kesafim. #449#