

# עֵטְרַת הַשָּׁבוּעַ

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov  
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

פרשת אמר  
ה' אייר תשס"ה  
May 14, 2005

כ' לעומר - יסוד שבתפארת

Candle Lighting:	7:46
זמן קריאת שמע:	8:39
Second זמן קריאת שמע:	9:15
Latest שחרית:	10:11
Earliest הבדלה:	8:54

This week's edition of  
ATERES HASHAVUA  
Is sponsored by  
Tami & Nathan Braun  
In honor of the birth  
of their grandson  
YEHUDA  
Born to their children  
Avi & Efrona Shane

## A RESULT OF ME

Rabbi Refoel Stefansky, 10th Grade Rebbe

אמר אל הכהנים בני אהרן ואמרת אלהם [כא:א]

SAY TO THE KOHANIM, THE SONS OF AHARON, AND TELL THEM

This week's parsha discusses the divine responsibilities placed on the Kohanim, who are designated to perform the *avodah* on behalf of the Jewish People. Rashi explains that reason the Torah wrote both 'Kohanim' and 'Bnei Aharon' is to warn the adult Kohanim to protect their children from becoming *tamei*. Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt'l* points out, however, that both 'Kohanim' and 'Bnei Aharon' are referring to adults! Where is the allusion to the children?

Rav Moshe answers with a beautiful insight into chinuch, bearing a lesson that is relevant to our daily dealing with teaching our children even today. In order for a parent to succeed in educating children, he must impart in them a love for performing mitzvos. If a parent tells his child that while it is very difficult to keep Shabbos, Yom Tov, or any particular mitzvah, he himself was able to overcome the *nisayon*, his son might not follow his father's example, rationalizing that he is not on the same *madriegah*. Yet if a child hears from his parents about the beauty of Torah and mitzvos, and hears the message of *כי הם חיינו וארך ימינו* - then the parent will have success in proper education from the imbued love he has imparted to his child.

This thus explains the repetition of 'Kohanim' and 'Bnei Aharon'.

Moshe Rabbeinu must teach the Kohanim the significance of being like Bnei Aron, feeling the wonder of their unique mitzva. By following both as Kohanim and as Bnei Aharon the *halachos* applicable to the actual *avodah* – their children will be naturally educated by them. For Kohen to raise a Bnei Aharon, he must first act as a Kohen.

(Continued on page 3)

## THE FORTHCOMING SIMCHA

Mordechai Picker, Mesivta Alumnus

ובקצרכם את קציר ארצכם לא תכלה פאת שדך בקצרך ולקט  
קצירך לא תלקט לעני ולגר תעזב אתם [כג:כב]

WHEN YOU REAP THE HARVEST OF YOUR LAND, YOU SHALL NOT REMOVE COMPLETELY THE CORNERS OF YOUR FIELD AS YOU REAP AND YOU SHALL NOT GATHER THE GLEANINGS OF YOUR HARVEST; FOR THE POOR AND THE PROSELYTE YOU SHALL LEAVE FOR THEM

Towards the end of this week's *sedra* as we go through the *avodah* of the Kohen together with the different Yomim Tovim, we come across the *halachos* concerning Rosh HaShana. The above *pasuk* mentions the laws concerning *leket* and *shikchah*, the crops that are set aside for the poor person. Rashi says on the quoted *pasuk*, "Rav Avdimi asks, Why did the Torah place these *halachos* in the middle of the holidays – Pesach and Shmini Atzeres on one side, and Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur and Succos on the other? This is to teach that whoever fulfills the laws concerning all these things, it's as if he has built the Beis HaMikdash."

Rav Shimon Shwab *zt'l* asks what the connection is between *leket*, *shikchah* and *peah*, to the building of the Beis HaMikdash? Furthermore, why is this *pasuk* in the middle of the discussion of Yomim Tovim?

He explains that the *pasuk* could be hinting to the holiday that will be in between the other holidays, which is the future joyous day of the ninth of Av. We know that the ninth of Av will be a holiday in the future from the *pasuk* in *Zecharia* [8:19] that says, "The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth day of the month are full of great celebration and a big Yom Tov for the Jewish People. The 'fast of the fifth' refers to the ninth of Av. The first and second

(Continued on page 3)

This week's edition is sponsored by Rabbi and Rebbetzin Refoel Stefansky in memory of his beloved mother  
רות בת רב מרדכי ז"ל  
נפ' ד' אייר

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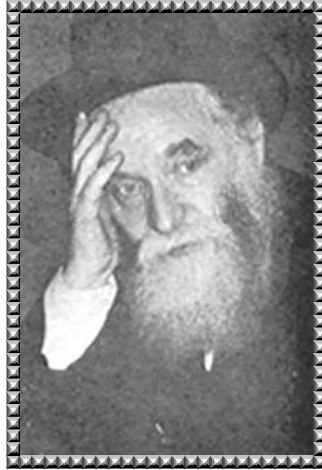
# FOCUS ON GREATNESS

by Avi Lieberman

RABBI AHARON KOTLER *zt'l*  
5652 / 1891 – 2 KISLEV 5723 / NOVEMBER 29, 1962

"The purpose of the yeshiva is not the Roshei Yeshivos or Rabbanim or educators that it produces, but simply the development of true Bnei Torah, versed not only in the fundamentals of Torah but in the fundamental nature of Torah, to whom Torah is the pulse of life. The yeshiva is the repository of the mesorah, securing the future of Torah and of Klal Yisroel." [Rabbi Aharon Kotler *zt'l*]

- Aharon was born in 5652 in the town of Sislovitz, where his father was the town rav.
- His genius was recognized while he was yet a young child, through his knowledge of *Tanach* which he could repeat by heart, as well as through his amazing comprehension of *gemora*.
- At the age of ten, he was sent to learn with HaRav Zalman Sender-Shapira of Krinki.
- At thirteen, he went to Slabodka, where he learnt under the Alter, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel and HaRav Moshe Mordechai Epstein.
- During his time there, young Aharon also heard *shiurim* from Rav Boruch Ber Lebowitz, who had his own yeshiva in one of the suburbs of Slobodka.
- He was known as the "*Sislovitzer Iluy*," after the town from where was born, and became famous in the yeshiva world.
- Reb Aharon became the son-in-law of HaRav Isser Zalman Meltzer, the *rosh yeshiva* of Yeshivas Eitz Chaim in Slutsk, where he was appointed a *rosh yeshiva* and delivered *shiurim*, all before he was twenty-five years old.
- When the Bolsheviks rose to power in Russia and began their persecutions of religion, Yeshivas Eitz Chaim of Slutsk was one of their first victims. The *roshei yeshiva* were hounded and the yeshiva was ordered to disband.
- Reb Aharon secretly crossed into Poland with the larger portion of the student body and opened his own Yeshivas Eitz Chaim in Kletsk, which flourished until the Second World War.
- In addition to his duties as *rosh yeshiva*, Reb Aharon was active in efforts to bolster *Yiddishkeit* in Kletsk and the rest of Poland.
- With the Russian occupation of Poland in 1939, Reb Aharon escaped; first to Vilna, then to Kobe, Japan, arriving in the United States in April, 1941. Two tattered suitcases, four hundred dollars and a churning heart, were all that Reb Aharon brought with him when he arrived in America.



- When Reb Aharon came to America, his primary task at hand was the *hatzolah* of European Jewry. He assumed a leading role in the operations of the Vaad Hatzolah, a coalition of Orthodox Jewish groups dedicated to the relief and rescue of Europe's Jews. Reb Aharon's role in galvanizing and directing the group was a major factor in the significant accomplishments of the Vaad throughout the war years.

- Reb Aharon took his first step towards the vitalization of Torah life in America with the opening of Beth

Medrash Govoha in a converted house in Lakewood, New Jersey in April 1943.

- The yeshiva grew and progressed from its opening; increasing from fourteen bachurim into 140 by the time of Reb Aharon's *petirah* nineteen years later.
- During this time, Reb Aharon's emergence as the leading *godol hador*, expressing pure, Torah ideals in his characteristic, uncompromising way, brought a new consciousness of Torah Judaism to American - and world Jewry.
- Reb Aharon became involved in many different organizations throughout his tenure in America. He was part of Chinuch Atzmai, the independent network of Torah day schools in Eretz Yisroel, founded in 1953, and took over the leadership of Torah U'Mesorah, the American day school movement, after the death of its founder HaRav Shraga Feivel Mendelowitz *zt'l*.
- Reb Aharon also headed Agudas Yisroel's Moetzes Gedolei Hatorah and the Agudas Horabbonim, guiding them and taking part in all their major decision making.
- Reb Aharon Kotler was *niftar* on Thursday, 2 Kislev, 5723 at the age of seventy one.
- It was estimated that 50,000 people attended the *levaya* in America and another 100,000 in Eretz Yisroel where he was buried next to his father-in-law Reb Isser Zalman Meltzer *zt'l*.

As Reb Aharon Kotler *zt'l* once prepared to leave for a visit to Eretz Yisroel, his *talmidim* were making plans to escort him to the airport. Reb Aharon let it be known that he preferred everyone remain in *beis medrash* rather than close their *gemaros* to see him off. The *talmidim* called Reb Moshe Feinstein *zt'l* and asked what to do. "Escort the Rosh Yeshiva," answered Reb Moshe. "To honor Reb Aharon is to honor the Torah itself."

Every Shabbos, we begin our *seudah* Friday night with the tefilla of *Shalom Aleichem*, the *piyut* which marches the Shabbos Queen into our homes. We sing through the stanzas, "*Shalom Aleichem. . . Bo'achem L'shalom. . . Borchuni L'Shalom. . .*" all which declare with tunes of praises our excitement and *brachos* for the *malachim* that are coming into our home. Yet when we come to the final stanza we state, "*Tzeischem L'Shalom, May you leave in peace.*" It seems unusual that just as we welcome in the Shabbos Queen, we are right away saying good-bye? Even though they aren't leaving us for a while, why are we seemingly voicing our "anticipation" of their departure right when we welcome them in?

My rebbe, Rav Boruch Rabinowitz answers this question with a *moshol*. Imagine you were given a free ticket to an all-day concert with the best Jewish performers out there. Since the concert is the entire day, you're enjoying yourself with the music, as well as tours of the concert hall, the snack vendors and shmoozing with your *chevra*. After all, there's plenty of time.

Yet imagine if instead of the concert being all day, it were for only *two hours*. There's no time to go around schmoozing! There's so little time that every moment counts! "I can't miss Avraham Fried's performance, or Yeedle and Lipa's duet!" you would howl. You would spend the entire time immersed in the concert.

This is why we say "*Tzeischem L'Shalom*" already on Friday night. We are telling everyone present at the table that Shabbos is only for a short time – we have to make every second count. Turn every minute of Shabbos into *kedusha*; whether it's through the davening, *zemiros* or *chulent*, we must realize that we have such a limited time with the Shabbos Queen. That is why we plant this reminder right at the beginning of Shabbos; so the message will stay with us for the rest of the day. May we truly make the most of this holy and special day. . . Good Shabbos.

RABBI STEFANSKY (continued from page 1)

Similarly, another important lesson is given in the Navi by an incident together with the mother of Shimshon HaGibor. In *sefer Shoftim* [17:7] when the *malach* appears to the wife of Manoach, he tells her not to drink wine or eat anything *tamei* because her unborn child will be a *nazir* from birth. Upon hearing this, Manoach davens to Hashem for the *malach* to appear once again and tell him how to treat his child – "וַיֹּרֶה מֵהַנְּעֻשָׁה לְנֶעֱר הַיֶּלֶד."

Rav Shimon Schwab *zt'l* asks in his *sefer* why Manoach davened for the *malach* to reappear once more - what did he not understand? The *halachos* of *nezirus* are written in the Torah, and surely he knew that there was no shortage of great people during his time that he could have approached and asked advice from. Why should the *malach* emerge a second time when it seems unnecessary? Furthermore, it appears rather peculiar that when the *malach* does reappear, he seems to simply restate what he said when he appeared to Manoach's wife originally. "From all

that I told your wife, you should grant yourself. . ."

Rav Schwab explains that Manoach was not requesting the angel's return to ask him questions regarding *hilchos nezirus*; rather his question was one of *chinuch*. Manoach's question of "מה נעשה" "לנער היולד" was how can a father raise his son as a *nazir* with extra sanctity and stringency that the rest of Klal Yisroel does not have, if the father himself is also not a *nazir*? It is for this reason that the *malach* reappeared and explained, "From all that I told your wife", you the father must also keep the *halachos* of *nezirus*! If you want to raise a *nazir*, the only way to do so is for you to be a *nazir* as well.

As we are granted the opportunity to guide our families through life, we too mustn't forget that we are on the bandwagon together with them. We must constantly continue to grow and imbue ourselves with the same messages we want to impart to our children, and only then will we be truly successful. Good Shabbos.

MORDECHAI PICKER (continued from page 1)

Beis HaMikdash were destroyed on the ninth of Av, and the third one is going to be built on the ninth of Av.

The final Beis HaMikdash is going to be built by Moshiach ben Dovid who will come from Rus, the wife of Boaz, "From the fact that he fulfilled the mitzvah of *leket* and *shikchah*." It is from here that we learn the concept brought down by Rashi, that 'whoever fulfills the laws concerning all these things, it's as if he has built the Beis HaMikdash.'

With this we can also understand the *mishna* in *Maseches Taanis* [4:8] that says how the unmarried girls would go out on the fifteenth of Av and on Yom Kippur, and tell the men to gaze. It is understood how they could do this on Yom Kippur because we are like angels, but why weren't they scared of improper thoughts on the fifteenth of Av? The answer is that in the future the fifteenth of Av will be a holiday because on the ninth the Beis HaMikdash will be rebuilt, and the seventh day after that - the fifteenth of Av - the *yetzer hara* will no longer exist.

This is why the *mishna* ends by quoting the Pasuk from Shir HaShirim [3:11], "Go forth and gaze, daughters of Tzion, upon Shlomo HaMelech adorned with his crown His nation made Him on the day of his wedding and on the day of the joy of his heart." 'The day of the wedding' is referring to the day we received the Torah, as well as Yom Kippur when we received the second *Luchos*. Furthermore, the 'day of the joy of His heart' is referring to the building of the Beis HaMikdash; the fifteenth of Av and the end of the Chanukas HaBayis. Let us all merit the *bracha* described at the end of the *mishna*, with the arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu and the Geulah Shleimah, *bimheirah biyameinu amen*.

# אמת ליעקב

Weekly Insights from Moreinu HoRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l

וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת

Of all the *mitzvos* in the Torah, perhaps the one that spans the longest length of time is *sefira*. For forty nine days (nights) between the second day of *Pesach* and *Shavuos*, we count, out loud, with a *bracha*, "today is so many days which are so many weeks of the *omer*." Why do we do this? What is the reason for our counting?

It is brought in the *medrash* that the reason for this *sefira* is one of *ahavas HaTorah*. Following the Bnei Yisroel's mass exodus from Mitzrayim, they were ready and willing to accept the Torah. Yet, Moshe told them that instead of receiving the Torah right away, they would have to wait fifty days. The Bnei Yisroel then eagerly anticipated the giving of the Torah, to the point of counting aloud each of the days. It is in memory of this incredible display of *ahavas HaTorah* that we count our forty nine days of *sefira*.



R' Yaakov with R' Yaakov Yitzchak Ruderman zt"l

It is with this understanding of the reason behind *sefiras haomer* that we can come to have at least partial insight into the reason for the mass death of nearly all of the *talmidei Rebbi Akiva*. It says in the *gemara*, "Rebbi Akiva had 12,000 pairs of talmidim, and all died in the span of days between *Pesach* and *Shavuos*". What heinous crime was committed that deserved such a terrible punishment? The *gemara* says that their sin was that the more learned of them did not have a proper level of respect for those who were less learned. While the *dor hamidbar* showed an incredible display of *ahavas HaTorah*, generations later the *talmidei Rebbi Akiva* died because of their *lack of kavod HaTorah*.

Yet how can this be true? The talmidim of Rebbi Akiva were the *crème-de-la-crème*, they were the giants of their generation. How could it be that they were so lacking in the most basic level of *kavod HaTorah*?

Reb Yaakov answers this perplexing question with a *mashal*. It is a well known fact that the best time for fishing is while it is raining. Why is this so? The reason is because when it rains, all the fish go to the surface, to catch the rain in their mouths. What drives the fish to do this? Surely they have enough water - they are swimming in it! The reason they do this is because their whole life revolves around water; even the smallest drop of water is precious. The same thing held true for the *talmidei Rebbi Akiva*. Their whole lives revolved around the "sea" of Torah. While it is true that they did have *kavod HaTorah*, they didn't do as the fish did. Every little drop of Torah that they learned, even from those lesser than them, should have been treated with the highest level of respect. For this lack of respect to the Torah, they deserved such a severe punishment. Through our counting the *moer* we will hopefully instill into ourselves proper *ahavas haTorah* as we prepare for *Shavous* and may we merit as proper *kabolas HaTorah*.

One summer, while Reb Shlomo Kohen; author of *Cheshek Shlomo* was at a resort, his home in Vilna was robbed; valuable silver items which were given to him as wedding gifts were taken. His family decided not to tell Reb Shlomo of the robbery; it would only cause him heartache. Knowing how removed his mind was from such things as cups and candlesticks, they assumed that as long as he was not told about the theft, he would not realize that it had occurred.

After he returned to Vilna, a visitor mistakenly asked him, "So, what does the Rav have to say about the robbery?" That was it. The secret had been told.

When Rav Shlomo heard the whole story, he rushed to his bookcase and looked for his rare set of *Gidulei Terumah* and *Maharashdam*. Finding them there, he exclaimed, "There could not have been a robbery. How could the thief have left these here?!"

M.A.Y.

of Greater L.I.  
516 · 374 · 6465

1170A William Street  
Hewlett, NY, 11557

AteresHaShavua@aol.com



## EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor In Chief

Avi Lieberman

Asst. Editor

Reuven Davies

Emes L'Yaakov

Ephraim Weiss

Contributing Editors

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