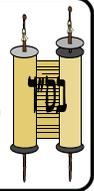




# Kinder Torah

## Chol HaMoed Pesach



### Days of Growth

**"M**azel tov! Mazel tov!"

"Abba and Imma! What a wonderful surprise! I did not expect to see you here at the hospital."

"We wouldn't miss it for the world, Esti. We want to see our youngest grandchild and his happy parents."

"Here he is. Just a few hours old."

*The Saba and Savta look lovingly at their grandson.*

"He is so sweet. A pure neshama. There is nothing in the world as beautiful as a new born baby. Hashem gave him a special "chen" (charm). May he always continue to give you much nachas."

"Amen!"

*The little baby boy grows and develops. At his first birthday, the family gathers together for a little celebration.*

"Look at little Naftoli. He is every bit of one year old - walking, talking, and acting like a little man. He has grown so much in his first year!"

"He has had a wonderful year."

**T**he growth process is the most beautiful time in a person's life. From infant to one year, he accomplishes much more than any other year of his life. Rav Shimon Pincus zt"l describes the days of *Sefiras HaOmer* (Counting the Omer) as "days of growth," comparing them to the first year of a child's life. On the first day of Chol HaMoed Pesach we begin the seven week process of counting the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuot. We have a golden opportunity to grow spiritually during this time. Pesach is compared to birth. Our nation was born on that first Pesach, over 3300 years ago. Each year we re-experience that birth on a national and personal level. After we are born, we have the opportunity to grow - just like a newborn baby. We are in the midst of days of growth. What wonderful days! We receive tremendous *Siyata DiShmaya* (Heavenly Assistance) to grow spiritually during this period. Let us seize the opportunity.

**S**even weeks can be a long time, however it can also pass very quickly. It all depends upon how well prepared you are. If we know what our opportunities are, and how to take advantage of them, then we can gain so much during this time. Rav Pincus has a seven week plan, which gives us a goal for each week of the Omer. B'ezras Hashem we will be learning that plan together, kinderlach. May we all grow together during these next seven weeks.

*Kinderlach . . . We have a golden opportunity. Hashem gave us a wonderful gift - seven weeks of tremendous Siyata DiShmaya. Now is the*

*time to grow in our middos, our Ahavas (love for) Hashem, Ahavas Torah, and Ahavas Yisrael (love for our fellow Jews.) In order to take full advantage of this opportunity kinderlach, we need a plan. We will be going through the steps together over the next seven weeks. Hatzlach rabba (have great success) kinderlach!*

### An Overflowing Well

**W**e are in the middle of the first week of Sefiras HaOmer, kinderlach. *Chessed* is the middah that we must strengthen this week. Avraham Avinu was the father of *chedsed*. Rav Pincus explains that he created a worldwide revolution of *chedsed*.

**B**efore Avraham Avinu arrived on the world scene, everyone followed the teachings of Sdom. The Sdomites were very wicked. They believed that giving to needy people was a big sin. A righteous person was one who kept his own possessions to himself. Why? They reasoned,



"Hashem created me rich and you poor. That means that He wants me to be rich and you to be poor. If I give you money for food, clothing, and a home, then I am messing up Hashem's world." The Mishna conveys this idea, "What is mine is mine and what is your is yours . . . Some say that this is the middah of Sdom" (Pirkei Avos 5:10).

**A**vraham Avinu came along with a different way of thinking that changed the whole world. To keep extra possessions for yourself when other people need them is cruel. To give to them is good and kind. How do we know this? Just look at the world. It is one huge symphony of giving. Hashem's creation of the world and giving life to all of its creatures was an unparalleled act of *chedsed*. He continues to provide for all of the needs of all of His creations every moment of every day. Is there a bigger demonstration of *chedsed* then this?

**T**herefore, Avraham Avinu concluded that we must be like Hashem. We must provide for people in the same way that He does. He feeds the hungry, so must we. He provides clothing and shelter to

those who are lacking, so must we. The purpose of the creation of the world is for Hashem to give to His creatures. Hashem is pure kindness and His world is pure kindness. Therefore, when we give, and give, and give, we are emulating The Creator and fulfilling the purpose of creation.

**H**ow do we practice *chedsed*? Do we give to people because they are noodniks? Hopefully not. Avraham Avinu surely did not. He realized that he was here in this world to serve people who needed him. He didn't just give the angels a piece of bread to eat. He bowed to them. "You are my masters! I am here to serve you. I am your slave because I have money and you are lacking." If I am healthy, I have to serve someone who is sick. Hashem is always serving us. So too, I must serve you. He gave them a sumptuous feast - the best of the best that he had to offer. That is true *chedsed*. That is what we are striving for.

*Kinderlach . . . Avraham Avinu is our role model for chessed. He was like an overflowing well - always spilling chessed. He gave lavishly to anyone who needed. When he was old and sick, recovering from his bris, he went out into the desert looking for guests. The whole essence of his personality was giving to people and to Hashem. Kinderlach, we are surround by people who need our kindness. Our parents need us to listen to them. They also get nachas from our expressing appreciation for all of the good things that they do for us. Imma loves help with the housework. Our teachers need us to work hard and behave well in school. What a chessed to become a model student! Our siblings can always use our help - with schoolwork, encouragement in all areas, and general courteous behavior. Neighbors will benefit greatly from our chessed when we help them with child care, housework, and the consideration that is so important for good relations. The bus driver, storekeeper, home repairman, and even the street cleaner all appreciate a warm smile and a thank you for their hard work. The world is full of opportunities for chessed kinderlach. Take advantage of them and become an Ish Chessed. Just like our great forefather Avraham Avinu.*



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