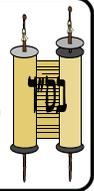




Kinder Torah

Parashas Shemini



You are in Control

Kinderlach, we are in the midst of the second week of Sefiras HaOmer. Rav Shimshon Pincus zt"l relates that these days are the roots and foundation of all of the days of the year. A tree with good roots will grow straight and strong. Similarly, if we conduct ourselves properly during these days of Sefiras HaOmer, Hashem will plant wonderful opportunities in our lives all throughout the year.

The Arizal adds that we must be very careful during these days of the Omer to strengthen love, brotherhood, and companionship among friends and family. We should honor each other, and distance ourselves from arguments, strife, and jealousy. It is especially important to bolster the unity between people who are learning Torah together.

Why strengthen love and companionship? Because the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuos are days of growth. The ultimate accomplishment is when the Jewish people grow together as a whole. One who detaches himself from the Jewish people (Heaven forbid) misses the opportunity completely. Strife and contention undermine the love between people and cause the biggest rifts in Klal Yisrael. Now is the time to be connected, not detached. We said last week that Sefiras HaOmer is like the growth period of a newborn baby. A baby needs family, to keep him alive and growing. So too, we must stay connected to Klal Yisrael, especially our family and friends with whom we learn, for they are our source of life and growth.

Childhood is also a dangerous time. An infant is much more susceptible to catching colds and diseases than an adult is. He must be protected. So too during Sefiras HaOmer, our period of growth, we must protect ourselves from committing *aveyros* – especially *bein-adam-lichaveyro* (between man and his fellow man), because they are particularly damaging.

The *middah* (character trait) to work on this week is *gevurah* – control. Do what should be done, and refrain from the forbidden. Be in control of yourself. This allows Hashem to keep control of the world. When we stop ourselves from doing evil, it gives Him the power (so to speak) to stop evil in its tracks. Yitzchak Avinu was the master of *gevurah*. He was prepared to allow his father to sacrifice him to follow Hashem's will. His *Yetzer HaTov* (good inclination) ruled over his entire being, not allowing even one iota

of evil to enter. This is *gevurah*. This is the opportunity that we have this second week of Sefiras HaOmer.

Kinderlach . . . Who is a gibbor (strong person)? One who can lift up great weights? No. One who has great sums of money? No. One who has political power to rule over people? No. One who is in command of a great army? Not at all. A gibbor is one who is on control of himself, as the Mishna states. "Who is a gibbor? One who conquers his yetzer (evil inclination)" (Pirkei Avos 4:1). That is the real strength, the strongest power. When a person overcomes his Yetzer Hora, it enables Hashem to overpower the forces of evil in the world. Peace and blessing prevail upon Klal Yisrael. Resist the urge to become angry, kinderlach. Leave aside that extra unnecessary piece of cake. Jump out of bed in the morning with great energy. Don't let your mind wander during school. Make peace with the boy who was bothering you. These are all feats of strength, kinderlach. Be a hero. Bring Hashem's gevurah into the world.



What Can I Do?

One *chattos* (sin offering), two *olahs* (burnt offerings), two *shlomims* (peace offerings), and one *mincha* (meal offering). Aharon and his sons entered the Mishkan, on the eighth day of its inauguration and sacrificed all of these *korbonos* to the Almighty. They waited for His ac-

ceptance. Yet the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) did not come down. Where was the Heavenly fire that would descend and devour the *korbonos*? Was Hashem ignoring them? What would be? What was Aharon's reaction to this disappointment?

"I know that The Holy One is angry with me. It is because of me that the *Shechina* did not come down." Imagine that! Klal Yisrael sinned with the *Egel HaZahav* (Golden Calf). Aharon tried to stop them in every way possible. They even threatened to stone him to death. Yet he still felt responsible.

Rav Yerucham Levovitz zt"l points out that the nature of a person is the opposite. When something bad happens, he looks to blame others. Even if he realizes his own mistake, he feels that other people's mistakes are greater, and they caused the problem. Yet every person's actions can influence the world. For better or worse. Aharon HaKohen shows us the proper way to react to difficult situations. To arouse ourselves to improve.

Kinderlach . . . We do not know why tragedies happen. Who knows what Hashem's cheshbonos (calculations) are? Why did that happen to those people? However, there is one thing that we do know. Every event is an opportunity to uplift ourselves. Try to change one little thing that we are doing. Try to speak a little nicer to our classmates. Try to come a little faster when Imma calls. Try to concentrate a little harder during your tefillos (prayers). Try a little harder to stay away from arguments over silly things. Who knows? Maybe your not-so-small effort will make the difference.

Parasha Questions:

- What did the entire Nation of Israel do when the fire came down from Heaven to the Mizbeach and consumed the *korbonos*? (9:24)
- Which two sons of Aharon died, and which two were left alive? (10:1,12)
- What did Aharon do when his sons died? (10:3)



From
Simcha Groffman for
Pesach thru
Shavuos.
270 pages, illustrated.
To order: send 65⁰⁰ to
POB 5338 Jlm 91052
or call:
585-2216



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, Bnai Brak, Cleveland, Detroit, Efrat, Ezras Torah, Geula, Givat Shaul, Givat Ze'ev, Gonen, Gush Shimonim, Haifa, Har Nof, Ilford, Istanbul, Izmir, Johannesburg, Klar HaRif, Kiryat Sefer, Kosel Maaravi, Los Angeles, Maale Amos, Maalot Dafna, Machane Yehuda, Manchester, Mittersdorf, Mattisyahu, Modlin, Neve Yaakov, North Miami Beach, Peduel, Philadelphia, Psagot, Ramat Shlomo, Ramot, Rechovot, Rommema, San Simone, Sanhedria HaMurchevet, Telz Stone, Toronto, Unsford, Yishuv Eli, Zichron Yaakov and other cities.
Subscribe for yourself or sponsor your shul. Just 120⁰⁰ per year. All contributions are deductible from Maaser Kesafim. #446#