

MAY 1, 2010 17 Iyar 5770 Parshat Emor

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The *Parsha* of *Emor* opens with the phrase "Say to the *Kohanim*, the sons of Aharon, and tell them..." regarding the laws of being a *Kohen*. Why the double expression by G-d requesting Moshe to tell the laws of impurity and other laws relating to their special status as a *Kohen*?

Rashi explains that the Torah is instructing both the *Kohen* for himself as well as his children to supervise their sanctity as well.

The *Dubno Maggid* explains that this is not simply an injunction on the parents to restrain their children from violating the law but an instruction to parents to role model these behaviors for the children so they learn to follow in their parent's footsteps. When we ask our kids to speak respectfully and in a proper tone of voice, do we model that very behavior? Is our freeway driving with our kids training them to serve as cursing race drivers suffering from Road Rage? And I dare not ask about our phone and text use while driving and the message that it sends to our future teenage drivers. G-d is offering us additional inspiration to succeed where we otherwise may have failed. Even if we as individuals lack the self restraint to refrain from sin or don't quite have the drive to do a particular *mitzvah* on our own, when we realize that what we do or don't do, say or don't say will be picked up and emulated by our children, we just may find the courage and strength to succeed.

A second message in this verse lies in the redundant phrase "The children of Aharon" that follows the word *Kohanim*. Is it not obvious when Moshe was instructed to speak to the *Kohanim* that they were the Sons of Aharon? All *Kohanim* save Aharon himself were the only *Kohanim* ever to be chosen! I saw a beautiful insight from Rabbi Baruch Sorotzkin citing his father Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin that G-d is sharing with us a key insight into helping ourselves and our families overcome the test of standing out in society and having extra restrictions that separate us from the surrounding culture. The *Kohanim* themselves had proscriptions on what they could eat, whom they could marry, where they could travel and more. That is a lot to ask of someone unless the child/person understands that this is a privilege for being who I am. Yes, it may be hard to live as a *Kohen* but it comes with the privilege of being a Ben Aharon - a son of Aharon. One key to helping our teenagers experiencing periods of rebellion in religion is to infuse a pride in their unique identity as a Jew. When you are proud of who you are and

where you come from, it is much easier to stand out. When the Nazi's ordered the Jews to wear a Yellow Star for shame, the Jews took this symbol and wore it with pride as a badge of honor much like a Sheriff in Los Angeles proudly wears his officer's badge. Like the Sheriff, the Jew must recognize the privilege to be part of something greater than themselves and that helps infuse in each of us the strength to fulfill our mission with pride. Yes, more is expected but more is received. I am part of the Jewish people and the distinction of kosher and *kippah* is far more than a crimp in my lifestyle, it is my membership card in a very exclusive club - that of the Am Hanivchar - the Chosen Nation called the Jewish People.

Rabbi Yakov Vann
Calabasas Shul
Director, Kashrut Services
Rabbinical Council of California

OU MARRIAGE RETREAT SPREAD THE WORD

Turn your good marriage into a great marriage! The fifth Orthodox Union Summer Marriage Enrichment Retreat is scheduled for Fri.-Sun. July 9-11, at the Woodcliff Lake Hilton. Practical ideas, skills and suggestions will be presented throughout the weekend by mental health professionals for strengthening the foundation and cornerstone of a loving, committed marriage. Details and registration www.oucommunity.org or contact Frank Buchweitz 212 613 8188.

NEW OU KOSHER DVD

NEW OU Kosher DVD: What's Wrong with this Chicken? With Rav Yisroel Belsky, Rabbi Nosson Goldberg and Rabbi Chaim Loike @ 10 per copy. ALL 6 OU Kosher DVDs - Kosher Kidz, Fish, Birds, Meat, Checking Vegetables + Chicken available @ \$40 from Suzanne Beck on the 12th floor or at ext. 346.

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Design & Layout by Susan



Lag B'omer
Sunday, May 2

UPCOMING EVENTS @ OU WEST COAST

A COMMUNAL SYMPOSIUM
A program from OU-West Coast
Synagogue Services in coordination with the
National OU Dept of Community Services

Tefilla Enrichment Initiative Shabbat, May 22, 6pm

A seminar featuring the Rabbinic panel of
Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky, BD-J
Rabbi Elazar Muskin, YICC
Rabbi Kalman Topp, BJ-BH
who will inspire and encourage us toward
more meaningful & personal prayer.

Moderated by **Jeff Rohatiner**
of the Happy Minyan

This program will offer practical tips
on improving the quality and
substance of our tefilah.

Location: Young Israel of Century City.

➤OU Annual Awards Banquet Tuesday, June 22

Honoring

David & Debbie Schultz
Seth & Ruth Berkowitz
Dr. Steve & Linda Tabak

and NCSY Awardees

Nissana Boxstein Perrie Lurie
Noah Small Benny Statman

Did you Know...? ABOUT THE OU

OU Press, the OU's prolific new publishing venture, offers the Jewish public an array of thought-provoking books. Watch for a new edition of the Kinot for Tisha B'Av, with a groundbreaking commentary based on the teachings of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, co-published with Koren Publishers Jerusalem. Browse the OU Bookstore at www.oupress.org ..

OU SYNAGOGUES AROUND THE REGION

Beverly Hills: Cong. Beth Jacob (310) 278-1911

- **Women's Spring Seudah Shlisheit Series with the Rebbetzins:**
MAY 15, 5:45pm Reb. Yael Weil @9634 Cresta; JULY 10, 6pm, Reb/Dr. Hindy Posy @ 1531 Glenville
- **TUES MAY 4, 8pm:** Special guest speaker, Father Patrick Desbois, "The Holocaust by Bullets"
- **Shavuot MAY 18-20:** S-I-R Rabbi Dr. Michael & Dr. Smadar Rosensweig

Beverly Hills: Young Israel of North B.H.: (310) 276-7650

- **Shabbat Yom Yerushalayim MAY 7-8:** Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Cantor Avi Erblich, Miriam Adani (Kever Rachel), Judy Klitsner (Pardes)

Calabasas Shul: (818) 591-7485

Canada-Calgary: House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel (403) 259-3230

- **WEDS JUNE 2:** Annual Dinner & Installation of Rabbi Yisroel Miller

Canada-Edmonton: Beth Israel (780) 488-2840

- **FRI MAY 7, 5:30pm:** Lag B'Omer in the Park, BBQ, RSVP
- **TUES MAY 18:** Shavuot Pizza/Pasta Dinner & All night learning

Canada-Vancouver: Schara Tzedeck (604) 736-7607

- **Shabbat MAY 1:** Luncheon w/guest speaker Dr. Deena Zimmerman. RSVP

Denver, CO : BMH-BJ Cong (303) 388-4203

Denver, CO: EDOS (303) 322-7943

- **Shabbat MAY 7-8:** S-I-R Rabbi Ron Y. Eisenman
- **SUN MAY 9, 5pm:** Lag b'Omer picnic

Irvine, CA: Beth Jacob (949) 786-5230

LA: Adas Torah (310) 203-9659 www.adastorah.com

LA: Aish Hatorah (310) 278-8672 x 305 or tsullivan@aishla.com

- **TUES MAY 11, 5:30pm:** Gala BQ "Sunrise at the Kotel"-Beverly Hilton

LA: B'nai David-Judea (310)-276-9269 or amram@bnaidavid.com

- **SUN JUNE 6:** Annual Tribute Dinner

LA: Etz Jacob (323) 938-2619

LA: Mogen David Cong. (310) 556-5609

- **Shavuot MAY 18-20:** S-I-R Rabbi Benjamin Blech

LA: Young Israel of Century City: (310) 273-6954

- **Shavuot MAY 18-20:** S-I-R rabbi Hershel Schachter
- **SUN JUNE 13, 10am:** Ariel Avrech Yahrzeit Lecture/Brunch w/ Dennis Prager - "Happiness is a Mitzvah, Not an Emotion"

LA: Young Israel of Hancock Park: (323) 931-4030

LA: Yeshiva of LA (YOLA) 310-203-3197 yeshivarambi@juno.com

- **MINCHA/MAARIV: SUN-THURS,** 15 minutes before Shkiah;

LATE MAARIV: SUN-THUR 10pm. M-TH am/pm: adults/students chavrusas

Laguna Woods, CA: Beth Torah (949) 587-1967 (*a retirement community*)

La Jolla: Adat Yeshurun (858) 535-1196

- **SAT MAY 1:** Lag B'omer bonfire
- **SUN MAY 2, 11:30am:** Lag B'omer Picnic, Mission Bay, \$10p/p
- **Shabbat MAY 7-8:** S-I-R Sara Rigler
- **SUN JUNE 6:** Shul Banquet Gala

Las Vegas, NV: Shaarei Tefila (702) 384-3565 (Mikva 384-3317)

- **SUN MAY 2, 4pm:** Lag B'omer BBQ (at the shul). Adults \$25, Kids \$15

Oakland, CA: Beth Jacob (510) 482-1147

Palm Springs, CA: The Desert Synagogue (760) 327-4848

Palo Alto, CA: Emek Beracha (650) 857-1800 (Mikva 493-5555)

- **MAY 9: Annual Dinner.** Guest speaker Hadassah Lieberman

Phoenix, AZ: Beth Joseph (602) 277-8858

Portland, OR: Kesser Israel (503) 222-1239

Sacramento, CA: Keneset Israel Torah Center (916) 481-1159

- **SUN MAY 23:** "An Evening in Eden"-Farm Fresh Food Gala & Silent Auction

San Diego, CA: Cong. Beth Jacob (619) 287-9890

San Diego, CA: Kehillat Ahavat Yisrael-KAY (858) 633-0181

San Francisco, CA: Adath Israel (415) 564-5665

Seattle: Bikur Cholim Machzikay Hadath (206) 721-0970

- **SUN MAY 9, 9am:** Warsaw Ghetto Holocaust Memorial Breakfast

FRI MAY 14: Dinner w/12 Israeli Soldiers.RSVP: www.hopeforheroism.org

Shavuot TUES MAY 18: All night learning

SUN JUNE 27: Annual Gala Dinner

Seattle: Ezra Bessaroth (206) 722-5500

- **FRI MAY 14:** Dinner w/12 Israeli Soldiers.RSVP: www.hopeforheroism.org

Seattle: Sephardic Bikur Holim (206) 723-3028

- **SUN MAY 2, 4pm:** Lag La'Omer BBQ & Raffle. RSVP

FRI MAY 14: *Dinner w/12 Israeli Soldiers.RSVP: www.hopeforheroism.org

Valley Village, CA: Shaarey Zedek Cong. (818) 763-0560

Venice, Pacific Jewish Center-The Shul on the Beach:(310)392-8749

Washington-Mercer Island: Shevet Achim (206) 275-1539

Woodland Hills: Beit HaMidrash (818) 999-2059 (5850 Fallbrook Ave.)

- **SUNS @ 8:30am:** following 8am minyan-Shiur-Baba Kama w/Rabbi Yaakov Rechnitz

West LA: Westwood Kehilla (310) 441-5288x30 director@kehilla.org

- **June 8:** Annual Dinner

NCSY-JSU-YACHAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS



Office contact: 310-229-9000 x 209 www.westcoastncsy.com

Start planning your summer, check out our amazing summer programs @ A

Want to help run a chesed project? call Solly at 310-557-6582

MAY 29-31: Spring Regional

CITY NCSY: Call Solly @ 310-557-6582 or Shess@westcoastncsy.com

DNL--MONs 7-8pm: @ Pizza World 365 S. Fairfax Ave.

Latte&Learning-TUES 7:30pm:@CB&T-233 S. Beverly Dr. w/R'Josh Horwitz

JR. NCSY: (6-8 grade) Call Josh 310-694-2976 or ncsyjosh@gmail.com

... **NCSY Bar/Bat Mitzvah** tutoring available. *Talmud Torah* classes.

YACHAD: Call Perri @323-228-4191. Ongoing activities.

B'NEI AKIVA OF LA ANNOUNCEMENTS

→ **Office:** 310-248-2450 bneiakivaLA@gmail.com

Shabbat SNIFIM-April 27, 2010

LAVI (Tarzana) 6:45 PM @ the Hadad's Home

6:15 PM walking group: corner Miranda St.(off Burbank/Lindley)

TIRAT TZVI (North Hollywood) 7PM @ Shaarey Zedek

May 2, 2010 - Lag Ba'Omer Bonfire,

6:30 PM Dockweiler Beach (8-12th Graders)

Upcoming Events: Chevyra Bet (9-12 grade)

May 20-23, 2010 - NY Shabbaton @ Moshava-IO

May 23, 2010 - Israeli Day Parade - New York. *Call for info*



OU COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

▶ **ONGOING: OU'S WOMEN'S TORAH NETWORK (WTN)**

Classes with Geri Wiener – *Spring Sessions*

→ **MONs-Valley** (*private home*):

→ **WEDs-City** (*OU Hdqtrs*):

▶ **WEDS MAY 5, 8pm: FRUM BUSINESS NETWORK – meets this month at BJ-BH in the Ives Youth Lounge**

▶ **SUN MAY 23, 8am-2pm: BIKUR CHOLIM/Adas Torah,**

Bnei Akiva/UCLA/YICC BLOOD DRIVE at YICC– For

appointments call Spencer Weiss at 310.256.9695

or spencermw@sbcglobal.net

ISRAEL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD

Learning from Israel about healthcare

Physicians, health-policy analysts and insurers from the US are learning from the Israeli example about how to provide universal coverage and excellent healthcare at low cost.

Making ends meet, with dignity

The Israel Free Loan Association, based on a Jewish concept endorsed by the sage Maimonides, offers Israel's working poor interest-free loans.

Computerizing organic farms

Israeli startup Farmigo believes its Fortune 500 approach to organic farming will help US farmers conduct their business more efficiently.

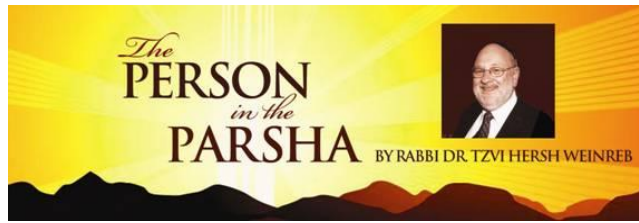
Merging science and Jewish thought

Serious philosophers rarely make good businessmen. But solar energy innovator Arnold J. Goldman is no navel-gazer. Goldman heads Jerusalem-based BrightSource Industries and its California-based parent, BrightSource Energy, which is contracted to deliver more than 2,600 megawatts of solar electricity in California using new technology demonstrated at Goldman's Solar Energy Development Center in the Negev, the largest solar energy facility in the Middle East.

In Israel, water is the new oil

For more than 50 years, Israel has been trying to solve the country's water shortage problem and has resorted to technological ingenuity to make it happen. As a result, Israel has emerged as a leader in developing water purification, irrigation and desalination technologies.

www.Israel21c.org



Parshat Acharei/Kedoshim

April 24, 2010 – 10 Iyar 5770

To read more articles and essays by Rabbi Weinreb, visit his blog at www.ou.org/rabbi_weinreb

"The Unburied Corpse"

Dead. Unburied. Abandoned. Forgotten.

What can be a worse fate?

I recently finished a very moving novel about the events immediately preceding World War I and the fate of those who were caught up in the chaos of the opening days of that war. The author of the book, a Jew, was Joseph Roth, and the name of the book is *The Radetzky March*.

I was drawn to this book because it deals, in part, with the Jews of Galicia and the effect that World War I had upon them. Both my paternal and maternal great-grandparents were caught up in the events of those times, and I wished to learn more about those events, if only from a fictional account.

I found the book informative and troubling, but the single event recorded in it that had the most impact on me was a description of the novel's hero, a combatant in the initial outbreak of the battle and gunfire. At one point, as he was fleeing for safety, he encountered the corpse of one of his fellows. Rather than pass this corpse by in his flight, he chose to drag the corpse to a nearby graveyard, dig a shallow grave with his bayonet, and bury the poor man.

Although the hero of this story was not a Jew, he was acting in accordance with a supreme Jewish value. At great personal risk, he buried a *met mitzvah*, an abandoned corpse with no one else present to bury it. Our Torah insists that giving such a corpse the dignity of a proper burial is a *mitzvah*, one which takes priority over almost any other good deed.

The source for this great *mitzvah* is in this week's Torah portion, *Emor*, where we read of the strict prohibition upon *kohanim*, members of the priestly caste, to come into contact with the dead. Exceptions are made for the *kohen's* parents, children, siblings, and spouse.

And an exception is made for the *met mitzvah*. Should the *kohen* encounter an abandoned corpse, and no one else is available to bury it, he is commanded to ignore the prohibition against contact with the dead, and he must bury that corpse himself.

This is the meaning of the phrase in the very first verse of our Parsha, "... he shall not defile himself for any dead person among his people..." (*Leviticus* 21:1). Paraphrasing Rashi's words here: "When the dead man is among his people, the *kohen* cannot defile himself, but when the dead man is not among his people, i.e., there is no one else to bury him, then the prohibition does not apply."

Our tradition is unusually sensitive to the sanctity of the human body. In life, certainly. But even in death. A proper Jewish burial is the last *chesed shel emet* (kindness of truth) that one can perform for another.

It is this important Jewish value which has led Jewish communities throughout the ages to do all that they could to recover the bodies of those of our brethren who perished in prisons, on battlefields, or in tragic natural disasters.

During the recent Pesach festival, a good friend reminded me of a long forgotten incident in our history, an incident which culminated in the recovery of two *metei mitzvah*.

Part of the story of these two heroes is recounted in the book *The Deed* by Gerold Frank. It is the story of two boys who gave their lives to assassinate a high British official, based in Egypt, whose policies threatened to block Jewish immigration into what was then Palestine.

Their names were Eliahu Bet Zouri and Eliahu Hakim. They acted under the orders of the high command of the "Stern Group". They succeeded in assassinating the official, but were tried and hanged for their efforts. They were buried near Cairo in 1945.

But they were never forgotten. In 1975, the State of Israel exchanged twenty Arab prisoners for the bodies of these two young men and reburied them in hero's graves upon Mount Herzl.

In recovering these bodies and eventually affording them an appropriate Jewish burial, the Israeli government was adhering to the teaching of this week's Torah portion. They saw to it that these *metei mitzvah* were buried properly.

And, much more recently, the contingents of Israeli rescue workers who dug beneath the rubble of the horrific earthquake in Haiti, in search not only of living survivors but of dead bodies, were acting in accordance with this great *mitzvah*. They were exemplifying a major Torah value.

And so, this week again, as so often in our study of the *parsha*, we discovered a value of paramount importance, a priority *mitzvah*, buried between the lines, nay between the words, of a simple phrase. This week, that phrase is in the very first verse of *Parshat Emor*.