

ISSUE #129

ט"ו אייר תשפ"ו
2/5/26



A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

פרשת אמור

כִּי תֵבֹאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם, וְקִצְרֹתֶם אֶת קִצְרֵיהָ וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קִצְרֹכֶם וְכוּ'. וְלֶחֶם וְקֵלִי וְכֶרֶם לֹא תֹאכְלוּ עַד עֵצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַד הִבֵּיאֲכֶם אֶת קֶרְבֵּן אֱלֹקֵיכֶם וְכוּ'. וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הִבֵּיאֲכֶם אֶת עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שֶׁבַע שָׁבָתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה. עַד מַמְחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה. (ויקרא כג, ט - טז)

When you shall enter the Land that I give you, and you reap its harvest, you shall bring an Omer of your first harvest ... You shall not eat bread or roasted kernels or plump kernels until this very day, until you bring the offering of your G-d... You shall count for yourselves – from the morrow of the rest day, from the day when you bring the Omer of waving – seven weeks, they shall be complete. Until the morrow of the seventh week, you shall count fifty days; and you shall offer a new meal-offering to Hashem. (Vayikra 23:9-16)

In this week's *Sidrah*, we learn about the Moadim and the various *mitzvos* associated with the Jewish calendar. The Torah teaches that before any new grain product may be eaten, an *omer*-measure of barley must be brought as a *minchah* on the second day of Pesach. Once the Korban Omer is brought, all grain becomes permitted for consumption.

However, although the Omer offering allows for the general use of all species of grain, the grain from the new crops cannot be used in the Beis HaMikdash until fifty days later, when the Shte HaLechem are offered on Shavuos. Accordingly, the Shte HaLechem are referred to in the Torah as *מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה*, a *new minchah offering*, because it is the first *korban* from the new wheat crop (whereas the Omer offering of Pesach is made of barley).

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* notes an interesting contrast between the Omer and the Shte HaLechem. Before the Omer was brought, all *שִׁדְרֵי*, *new crops*, were forbidden for general use. However, once the public Korban Omer was offered, almost all usage of the new harvest became permissible. At that point, only bringing *korbanos* from the fresh crop remained restricted. To allow this, there was an additional requirement of counting 49 days of the Omer and presenting another *korban*.

In summary, to receive permission for mundane use of the new crop, minimal intervention is needed – a simple Omer of barley suffices. However, to utilise the new harvest for holy purposes, a more extensive process is required, which includes the counting of the Omer and the offering of another *korban*.

The Rosh Yeshiva draws an important lesson from this: it is easier to attain physical benefits from this world and its contents than to achieve spiritual gains. To make use of the new crop for common purposes required only one public *korban* of the Omer for the entire nation. In contrast, deriving spiritual benefits from the world and using the fresh harvest as a way to connect to Hashem demanded more merits. Each person needed to count the Omer, taking advantage of these special days of preparation. Additionally, a significant *korban* of the Shte HaLechem had to be brought to enable the use of the new harvest for spiritual purposes.

This message challenges the common perception of achievements in life. Many people feel a great sense of joy and accomplishment when they acquire new physical possessions or reach a new professional status. However, when it comes to spiritual milestones or successes - such as learning Torah or performing a *mitzvah* in its ideal manner - they often fail to recognise these achievements and, unfortunately, do not experience the same sense of joy and fulfilment. In reality, it should be the other way around; only spiritual gains should be a true source of enjoyment and satisfaction.

This concept can be further understood through an insight from the Akeidas Yitzchok. The Mishnah (*Pirkei Avos* 4:16) states, רבי יעקב אומר, העולם הזה דומה לפרוזדור בפני העולם הבא. התקן עצמך, *R' Yakov says: This world is like a corridor before Olam Habah; prepare yourself in the corridor so that you may enter the banquet hall.* The Akeidah explains that, in addition to the basic lesson of the Mishnah - that to receive goodness in Olam Habah, one must prepare during this life in Olam Hazeh – there is another important message.

If someone were invited to the king's palace and arrived at the entrance hall expecting to find a comfortable chair, a lavish meal, and a plush bed filled with luxuries, they would be seen as foolish. There would be no valid reason for complaint against the king or his household; the issue lies in the visitor's unrealistic expectations. Clearly, such luxuries are reserved for the main palace.

Similarly, regarding the comforts and conveniences in this world, the Akeidah explains: A person who seeks a calm, peaceful life, free from anguish or worry, is like the visitor who looks for the comfort of a banquet hall in a lobby. This world is not intended to be a final destination; rather, it serves as a means to perform *mitzvos* and earn the ultimate reward in Olam Habah. Furthermore, any goodness one receives in this world should be viewed as an extra kindness, since this is not the place where one should expect rewards or comfort. He concludes, "One who internalises this understanding will spare themselves much aggravation and pain when things don't go as planned or when they encounter difficulties!"

Achieving a physical milestone in this world is comparable to receiving a luxurious chair in the corridor - such an accomplishment is not a genuine cause for satisfaction. A chair in the corridor holds little significance when compared to a chair in the banquet hall, which is undoubtedly more important and honourable. For this reason, spiritual achievements are more challenging to attain, yet once achieved, they are infinitely more meaningful.

Let us strive to learn from the laws of the Omer the essential lesson that genuine success in life is rooted in spiritual achievements. Although personal growth in Avodas Hashem can be more difficult to attain than material accomplishments, these spiritual successes are the true indicators of achievement. They lead to real satisfaction and earn us unimaginable goodness in Olam Habah.

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל and is presented by the Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association. To receive by email, please register your interest by sending an email to parshasheet@gyalumni.org.