



# THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn  
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

## Shabbat Parashat Emor

17 Iyar 5767; May 4-5, 2007

Haftorah is Ezekial 44:15-31

### Friday

Mincha 7:00 PM  
Candle Lighting 7:37 PM

### Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM  
Shacharit 9:00 AM  
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:21 AM (Gra"h)

### Pirkei Avot

6:35 PM  
Mincha 7:35 PM  
Shabbat Ends 8:43 PM

**Sunday** Shacharit 8:30 AM  
**Monday – Friday** 7:00 AM

## Save the Date

On **Shabbat May 12th** we will again have the privilege of hosting **Rabbi Yehuda Halpert** and his family. Rabbi Halpert will be speaking prior to Musaf and a shiur prior to Mincha including the topic: **"Ethical Investing: How is it Defined and Does Halacha Require It?"** If you are interested in sponsoring the Kiddush or Seudah Shelishit for this Shabbat please contact Jack Mermelstein.

## Daily Minyan

Our daily Minyan (Monday – Friday) is at 7:00 AM.  
Please help us with the Minyan. Any day(s) you could come to help would be greatly appreciated  
Sunday Minyan is at 8:30 AM.

## Salute to Israel Parade

Salute to Israel Parade on May 6<sup>th</sup> -  
11:00 AM to 4:30 PM



## Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Gail and Willie Hochman on the birth of their grandson Aryeh Leib. Mazel Tov to the proud parents, Nina and Judah Eizikovitz, as well as to the entire Hochman and Eizikovitz families. May they IY"H see much Nachas from Aryah Leib for many years to come and may we celebrate many Smachot with them in the future.

## Pirkei Avot Shi'ur

During the summer months, especially the weeks between Pesach and Shavuot, Pirkai Avos is traditionally studied and reviewed. Pirkai Avos are the most studied and well known Mishnayos in Shas .

As such, YIFL will resume the weekly Pirkai Avos Shiur starting this Shabbos with the Shiur taking place one hour before Mincha. All men and women are invited and encouraged to spread the word and participate in this exciting Shiur.

## Annual Journal Dinner

Please save the date -  
**June 3, 2007 for the YIFL**

Deadline is approaching, Please get your ads in and RSVP !

## Honorees:

### Baalei Keria:

Aaron Kor, Aaron Safier, Betzalel Bacon, Brad Kaufman, Dovie Fischer, David Gottlieb, David Schwartz, Ephraim Loewy, Evan Silver, Josh Herbert, Leslie Gabor, Covey Schnipper, Phil Kestenbaum, Yechiel Boussi.

### Awardees:

Rabbi Avidan Elkin – Hakarat Hatov  
Jerry Halpern – Talmud Torah  
Joe Smith – Manhig  
Sam Lorber, Paul Cooper – Founders  
Stu Mentzel – Minyonaire

## Torah Insights – Harav Shlomo Riskin

## Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Emor

### Leviticus 21:1-24:23

Efrat, Israel – What does it mean to be holy, to be spiritual, to be really and genuinely religious (and not merely observant)? And, especially in light of this particular period of the calendar year when we in Israel memorialize Holocaust Day and Memorial Day, and celebrate Israeli Independence Day and

Jerusalem Day; what gives so many special individuals the courage to place their lives at risk – and even sacrifice their lives – for their Jerusalem, for their Israeliness, for their nationality and their religion, for their beliefs and their homeland?

The Hebrew word which encompasses the various aspects of the personality trait which leads to sanctity and martyrdom is *Kadosh*, usually translated as holy. In last week's Biblical reading we came across the generic commandment "You shall be holy," (Lev. 19:2), and in this week's reading the Kohen – priests are commanded specifically to be holy (within the context of their prohibitions not to become defiled by contact with a corpse Lev.21:6), and the Jews are commanded to martyr themselves if need be (Lev 22:32, the Hebrew usage being *vehikdashiti*, "I shall be made holy in the midst of the children of Israel, I the Lord who makes you holy"), and the Festivals (our meeting days with G-d, Hebrew *mo'ed*) are called "holy convocations" (Lev 23:2). The source of this holiness is obviously G-d, as the Bible iterates and re-iterates, and as we have just seen in the Biblical verse referring to martyrdom. But what does "holy" actually mean, and how can we become holy people?

Conventional wisdom has it that holiness is linked to the mystical, the mysterious, the esoteric, probably emanating from a classical book on the subject of Rudolf Otto, "The Idea of the Holy," wherein the term "numinous" is coined to describe this mystical connotation of the concept. I believe that the Bible, and especially the classical Biblical commentaries of the Bible, would suggest a far more prosaic but more profound meaning to holiness, one which it would behoove each of us to try to attain.

As early as in the opening verses of the second chapter of Genesis, the Hebrew word *Kadosh* (holy) appears for the first time: "And G-d blessed the seventh day

and made it holy..." (Gen 2:3). The classical commentary Rashi (ad loc) explains both terms, blessing (*berakha*) as well as holiness (*kedushah*): "He blessed the seventh day by providing a double portion of manna for it, and He made the seventh day holy by not sending any manna on it." Since manna was the special food provided by G-d for the Israelites in the desert (perhaps a metaphor for wandering humanity in a world of transition between primordial Eden and eventual Paradise), blessing refers to the extra physical portion provided on Friday night for the Sabbath table, whereas *Kedushah* refers to the lack of the physical manna which did not fall on the Sabbath day at all.

Now the usual Hebrew meaning of *Kadosh* is separate, apart from (*Kedoshim tihyu, persushim tihyu*), and this definition would certainly be appropriate for G-d, who is theologically above, beyond, separate and apart from the boundaries and limitations of our physical, material world and existence. Since the human being is created in the Divine image, contains within his/her essential being a spark of the Divine, a portion of G-d from on High, each of us must develop within ourselves the ability to transcend the physical, to be involved in the more intellectual and other-than-worldly aspects of our life, which religious moralists would call the G-d within us rather than the animal within us. To do this is the higher purpose of the Sabbath days, twenty – five hours devoted to Prayer, study and loving familial (and communal) communication.

From this perspective, what does it mean to be holy? It means to be above the physical blandishments of monetary bribery, sexual seduction and temptation; it means not devoting oneself only – or mainly – to the acquisition of material wealth. A moral and ethical human being who knows how to say no to improper physical urges or suggestions and attempts to live his/her life in the pursuit of eternal values and ideals such as the acquisition

of knowledge, the betterment of society, the propagation of compassion and peace between individuals and nations, is indeed holy.

I would take this one step deeper. If G-d is eternal and His values are eternal, and if there is indeed a part of that eternal G-d within each of us, then insofar as we develop that divinely endowed soul within ourselves, we too become eternal, we too have the ability to transcend this physical world and this physical life, we too share in the life after life of the King of all Kings, the eternal life of all worlds (*El Hai ha-olamim*). Indeed, for someone who devotes his time in this world to the development of the divine within himself, the transition from life to life becomes almost natural and seamless.

When Rav Yosef Yitzhak, the Rebbe just prior to Rav Menahem Mendel Schneerson ztz"l stood fearlessly before the Communist Commissar who had put a gun to his head, the atheist war lord gazed with astonishment at the rabbinic sage. "Many heads have already rolled onto the floor of this office," he shouted. "You don't understand," replied the Rebbe. "I am constantly moving between this temporal world and the world of eternity. Mine is the G-d of eternity, so I need have no fear of you..."

Yosef Goodman, child of Efrat, son of Mordecai and Anne Goodman who own the pizzeria in Efrat, was a proud and outstanding member of the "Maglan" paratroopers of the IDF. When his parachute became entangled with that of his commander in a trial run, he had a split second to make a critical decision: either they would both crash, or he would disentangle his parachute plummeting to certain death but his commander would live. When he took the oath to defend the eternity of his nation with his earthly life, he had already made the decision. He disentangled his parachute....

When Roi Klein saw a hand-grenade

about to explode in a closed area where he and his unit entered to evacuate a wounded comrade, he knew what he had to do: smother the grenade with his body. Roi was killed instantly, but all the other soldiers remained alive. The reason he did what he did was clear; before he performed this act of Kiddush Hashem he cried out: "Shema Yisrael, HaShem Elokeinu HaShem Ehad." As we say in our morning prayers: "O Guardian of Israel, protect the remnant of Your nation Israel, and do not destroy Israel, those who say, Hear O Israel... Protect Your holy nation, protect the remnant of Your holy nation, and do not destroy Your holy nation..."

**By Shlomo Riskin**  
**Shabbat Shalom**

Shlomo Riskin  
Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone  
Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel

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## Celebration of Lag BaOmer

(ou.com)

### Where does the name come from?

The Day is given its name by its count in Sefirat HaOmer, which is thirty-three. How so? - You ask. Like so: The numerical equivalent of the Hebrew letter "lamed" is thirty. Similarly, the numerical equivalent of the letter "gimmel" is three. By higher mathematics, and the use of a high-powered calculator, the sum is thirty-three.

The "lamed" has the "l" sound; the "gimmel" has the hard "g" sound; the combination is written as "Lag," with the "a" having the pronunciation of the "o" in "hot."

"BaOmer" consists of two components:

1. **Ba**, which is a combination of a preposition (yipes! Grammar)

- not to worry) and the "definite article;" specifically, **in** (the preposition), and **the**, the definite article. Together: **in the**

2. **Omer**, which refers to the Grain Offering, called the Omer, which was brought in Temple times, and the day on which it was brought, the sixteenth of Nisan, is Day One of the Sefirat HaOmer, the Count of the Omer.

Thus, **Lag BaOmer means the thirty-third day in the Count of the Omer.**

In Israel, at Meron, the burial place of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his son, Rabbi Elazar b'Rabbi Shimon, tens of thousands of Jews gather to celebrate on the "Yahrtzeit," the anniversary of the death of the "godly Tanna," the great scholar who lived in the immediate aftermath of the Second Temple. With torches, song and feasting, the Yahrtzeit is celebrated, which may seem somewhat odd, but which was a specific request by Bar Yochai of his students

### Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai

#### Before the Cave

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was a student of Rabbi Akiva, who was the spiritual leader of the Bar Kochba Revolt against Rome in 135 CE, which began in glory and ended in tragedy. His teacher was one of the four great Sages who entered the "Pardes," the "Orchard" (not to be confused with the OU's Pardes Program); specifically, who probed the depths of Kabbalah, and came out mentally and spiritually whole. Clearly, Rabbi Akiva was the recipient of a living tradition which he passed on orally to his beloved student, Rabbi Shimon.

As a student of the spiritual leader of the revolt, bar Yochai was pursued relentlessly by the Romans. He and his son, Rabbi Elazar ben Shimon, took

refuge in a cave, where they remained for thirteen years.

#### In the Cave

During those years, Rabbi Shimon studied Torah with his son, the Revealed Torah and the Hidden, or Secret, Torah, the "Torat HaSod," also known as "Kabbalah," and translated, or mistranslated as "Jewish Mysticism."

Rabbi Shimon wrote down the latter material, for the first time, in a book called the "Zohar," meaning "Splendor" or "Radiance." This mystical tradition, kept alive by the RAMBAN, in his Commentary to the Bible, and others, resurfaced with a vengeance in the sixteenth century, and became the splendor and the glory of the "Ari" (the "Lion"), Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, and his followers in "Tzefat," or Safed, Palestine. It also became the basis of the unique spirituality of Chassidut, founded in the eighteenth century, by Yisrael ben Eliezer, the "Baal Shem Tov," in Eastern Europe.

The first time Rabbi Shimon came out of the cave, he was completely "out of tune" with the people of his generation. He observed Jews farming the land, and engaged in other normal pursuits, and made known his disapproval, "How can people engage themselves in matters of this world and neglect matters of the next world?"

Whereupon a Heavenly Voice was heard, which said "Bar Yochai, go back to the cave! You are no longer fit for the company of other human beings."

Rabbi Shimon went back to the cave, reoriented his perspective to some extent, and emerged again. This time, he was able to interact with the people of his generation, and become a great teacher of Torah, the Revealed and the Hidden.