

Ohr Shabbos

Shoneh Halachos - Hilchos Sfiras haOmer (Part 2)

The following is a translation of an excerpt from the Shoneh Halachos, a sefer by Rav Chaim Kanievsky that summarizes the halachos found in Mishnah Brurah and other sefarim.

3) There are situations which allow a person to take a haircut on Chol HaMoed (eg: one who is let out of jail on Chol HaMoed, see *סי' תקל"א*). It stands to reason, that such a person is also allowed to take a haircut during Sfiras haOmer, since it is not superior to Chol HaMoed. One who has a son who is to have his bris milah during Sfiras haOmer can take a hair cut in honour of the occasion. This is true even if the father himself is not doing the milah, and both the Sandek and the Mohel can also take a haircut. They can even take the hair cut on the day before the milah, but only near night fall. However, if the milah is scheduled to be on Shabbos, then one can take the hair cut on Friday before chatzos.

4) Regarding one who went ahead and got married during Sfiras haOmer when he shouldn't have, there is no punishment. However, this is only because the act of marrying is a mitzvah, and therefore, if one takes a haircut when they shouldn't have, it used to be the minhag that such a person would receive a knas and a punishment.

5) If Rosh Chodesh Iyaar falls out on Shabbos, since there is a double measure of Simcha (from Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh), there is reason to be allow one to take a haircut on erev Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh, even for one who typically keeps the aveilus of Sfiras haOmer from Pesach until Lag baOmer. So too, one may marry a woman on such a day, since the Seudah will take place on Shabbos and Rosh Chodesh.

6) If it happens upon a person a situation in which he is obligated to recite the blessing of Shehechianu, he may go ahead and make the blessing.

Parshas Emor

R' Naftali Cohen



The midrash tells us that the words *ברכו ה' מלאכיו גברי כח עשי דברו לשמע בקול דברו* "Hashem blesses His angels, warriors of strength, who do His word, to listen to the Voice of His words" (Tehilim 103:20) are referring to those who keep Shmita.

The Rav of Krakow, Rav Yosef Nechemia Kornitzer zt"l, explains how those words specifically describe a person who keeps Smita. He says that a mitzvah that causes enjoyment and/or benefit for a person, needs that much more work and focus in order to fulfill it with proper intent. The goal being that it should be completely *לשם שמים*.

He explains that leaving a field unattended and unworked is necessary for the land. By doing so, it reinvigorates itself for the future. It is something which would be done, even without Hashem commanding us to. So what's the reason that we were given the mitzvah of Shmita.

That one should leave the field fallow only because of the mitzvah. He should not have in mind at all that it is being done for the benefit of the field. However, to accomplish this, much fortitude is required. This is what the Torah is describing regarding one who keeps Shmita; they are warriors of strength because they do the word of Hashem, not for their own enjoyment, but to listen to the Voice of His Word.

With this idea, we can understand the Mishnah in Avos: *איזהו גבור הכובש את יצרו* which is simply understood to mean, "One who shows strength by conquering his Yetzer haRah. However, according to the above, we can explain the Mishna differently, that *כובש* can be understood as in the context of *כובש כמבושל*, preserving, meaning he is using and controlling his inclinations for Avodas Hashem.

Inspiring Stories

Rav Yudel Shapiro was a Rosh Kollel in Kollel Chazon Ish. He was known as a great talmid chacham who was fluent in all of Torah. During the last years of his life, he endured great difficulties, and yet his emunah and avodah during that time was steadfast. When he passed away, Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman came to pay a shiva call to his family. Before departing, he told the family, "Your father and husband was a true master of all of Torah. He had the entire Torah on his fingertips. But what made him truly a gadol was the fact that he accepted his afflictions with love and joy." As Rav Shiteinmam was leaving, Rav Chaim Greineman, who was also present and was a friend of Rav Aharon Leib and Rav Yudel Shapiro, turned to the family and said, "I apologize to the Rosh Yeshivah, but I humbly disagree. I have to say that I really believe that your father's true greatness was the fact that he was such a great master of Torah. He had everything on his fingertips. That is what was so unique about him." Rav Aharon Leib nodded his head in agreement and then walked out. A few minutes later, Rabbi Greineman left as well. The next morning, Rav Greineman's son came to wake up his father for Shacharis. He saw immediately that his father was pale and gripped with fear. "Tatty, what's wrong? What happened?" he asked. "Last night, Rav Yudel came to me in a dream,," said Rav Greineman. "His face was glowing. He said, 'My dear friend, you know the conversation you had in my home about what my greatness was? Rav Aharon Leib said my greatness was due to my accepting yissurim with love and you said it was because of my greatness in Torah. I want you to know that I am in my unbelievable place in Gan Eden already. It usually takes time - a day, a week, 30 days, or even a year yet I have already arrived in my place. Do you know why? It is because in heaven, they ruled like Rav Aharon Leib. My greatness is due to the fact that I

accepted my afflictions with love. They ruled that the greatest level a person can reach is when he accepts all of the pain of this world with love and joy." Rav Chaim was shaking when he retold his dream to his son. He then turned to his son and said, "Quick, let's get ready to go to Shacharis." They went to shul, and the Rav's son noticed that his father prayed an extremely long Shemoneh Esrei that morning. Shortly after they left shul, Rav Greineman slipped and fell backward. He landed on his back, resulting in several broken vertebrae. Due to this injury, he became paralyzed, and the last years of his life were filled with terrible pain and suffering. At his levayah, his son related that he never saw his father complain, even though he was in terrible pain. "I once asked him how he managed to deal with his situation and he told me something incredible. He said that when he took the fall that caused his injuries, he knew it didn't make sense. The ground wasn't slippery. It wasn't raining. What caused him to fall? He said that after his dream about Rav Yudel Shapiro, he had davened that he would have a place next to him in Olam Haba, and that he should also have the opportunity to accept pain with love, just as Rav Yudel did. "He told me that he was certain that he didn't just slip and fall; a malach pushed him to the ground. Realizing that this was all from Hashem, he decided then and there to accept it all with love. There is a powerful lesson to take from this story. The level that Rav Shapiro and Rav Greineman reached may be far above our heads, but we can learn from them that Heaven's judgment is in accordance with what Rav Aharon Leib declared. This sets our goals for us: to learn as much Torah, fulfill as many mitzvos, and do as much chesed as we can, and along with all that, to live with the realization that everything that happens is from Hashem. Even though we don't understand it, it's all good. This is what makes us true servants of Hashem.

Jewish History

18th Iyaar: Passing of Rama (1573?)

Rabbi Moshe Iserles ("Rama") of Cracow (1525-1573?) authored the glosses on R. Yosef Caro's the Code of Jewish Law and is regarded as the definitive Halachic authority for Ashkenazic Jews.

19th Iyaar: Yartzeit of Maharam (1293)

Renowned talmud chacham Rabbi Meir ("Maharam") of Rothenburg (1215?-1293) died in his cell in the Ensisheim fortress, where he had been imprisoned for ten years in an attempt to exact a huge ransom from the Jewish community. The money had been raised, but Rabbi Meir refused to have himself redeemed, lest this encourage the hostage taking of other Jewish leaders.

Weekly Challenge

How is it possible to daven maariv on nine consecutive nights and every shemoneh esrei be different?

Last Week: Find an example of something related to a melocha which we are more machmir about on Chol haMoed than we are on Yom Tov and Shabbos. **Answer:** On Shabbos, one does not need to protest if a hired worker chooses to work on ones property outside the tchum. However on Chol haMoed, one must insist that no work be done on ones property even outside the tchum.

A Glimpse Inside

R' Yisroel Portowicz



I was born and bred in Brooklyn NY. I learned in the Mir Yeshiva for Highschool and went to learn in Staten Island by Reb Yitzchok Lichtenstein and Rav Gershon Ribner. I then went to Eretz Yisroel and learned in Lakewood East and by Rav Aron Rubinstien. I got married here in the BAYT in 2008 and actually learned in this Kollel for a few months just after it originally opened. We then lived in Eretz Yisroel for 3.5 years where I was a Rabbi in Ohr Samaeach, the Yesod Branch. In 2011 I was offered the position as Youth Rabbi by Rabbi Bitterman's shul and we moved here to Thornhill. After a couple years, we decided to move on and then joined this awesome Kollel and community! We are so thankful and happy to be part of this amazing Makom Torah and community! Nothing can compare to what we have here in Kollel Ohr Yosef!