

PARSHAT EMOR 2019 – SOURCE SHEET

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Sponsored by Aaron & Lillian Fuchs in memory of Lillian's father
Irving Glatter, Yitzchak ben Dov Ber z"l – yahrtzeit: 29 Nissan

1. VAYIKRA 23 – SHABBAT & FESTIVALS

(א) וַיְדַבֵּר יְקוֹק אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: (ב) דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם מוֹעֲדֵי יְקוֹק אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֵלֶּה הֵם מוֹעֲדָי: (ג) שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ כָּל מְלָאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ שַׁבַּת הוּא לִיקוֹק בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם: (ד) אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְקוֹק מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם בְּמוֹעֲדָם:

God spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to the Israelites and say to them: These are My fixed times, the fixed times of God, which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions. On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a sabbath of complete rest, a sacred occasion. You shall do no work; it shall be a sabbath of God throughout your settlements. These are the set times that you should call out at their appointed times.

2. RASHI – WHY IS SHABBAT INCLUDED IN THE CHAPTER ON FESTIVALS?

ששת ימים - מה ענין שבת אצל מועדות? ללמדך שכל המחלל את המועדות מעלין עליו כאלו חלל את השבתות. וכל המקיים את המועדות, מעלין עליו כאלו קיים את השבתות:

Speak to the Israelites and say to them: These are My fixed times — This means, regulate the festive seasons so that all of Israel becomes practiced in their observance. We derive the law that they (the Sanhedrin) proclaim a leap-year (i.e. an extra Adar) for the sake of those living in the diaspora who have already left their homes in order to go up for the festival but have not yet arrived in Jerusalem.

On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a sabbath of complete rest — What is the relationship between the Sabbath and the festive seasons? [Why are they put together in the same chapter?] By putting both together, the Torah teaches us that someone who desecrates the festivals is regarded as though he desecrated the Sabbath, and someone who keeps the festivals is regarded as though he has kept the Sabbath.

3. RAMBAN – CHAGIM ARE HOLY, BUT SHABBAT LAWS TAKE PRECEDENCE

והנכון בעיני כי פירוש "מועדי ה' אשר תקראו אותם מקראי קודש אלה הם מועדי", על הנזכרים למטה בפרשיות, בחדש הראשון וגו', ולכן חזר שם פעם אחרת "אלה מועדי ה'", בעבור שהפסיק בענין השבת. והנה אמר "מועדי ה' אשר תקראו אותם מקראי קודש אלה הם מועדי" במלאכת עבודה, אבל השבת תשמרו לעשות אותה שבת שבתון מכל מלאכה שבעולם, כי יזהיר בשבת פעמים רבות. וירמוז עוד בכאן כי גם בבואו באחד מן המועדים לא תדחה לעשות בה אוכל נפש.

4. CHANUKAT HATORAH – ITS ALL ABOUT YOM KIPPUR

בפסוק דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם מועדי ה' וגו' ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת שבתון וגו'. הנה הקושיא ידוע "מה ענין שבת אצל מועדות?" ויש לפרש על דרך רמז, דהנה המספך של הימים טובים הם ששה ימים ב' של פסח וא' של שבועות וא' של ראש השנה וב' של סוכות. והנה בכל יום טוב מותר לעשות מלאכה של צורך אוכל נפש. וזאת הוא הכוונה, דקאי הכל על מועדות, רק ששת ימים -- דהיינו כל המועדות -- תעשה מלאכה לצורך אוכל נפש, אבל "וביום השביעי" דהיינו יום כיפור, "שבת שבתון הוא כל מלאכה לא תעשה", אפילו צורך אוכל נפש אסור.

5. RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS (5776) – THE SAME PATTERNS REPEATED

This [*“al derech remez”*] reading allows us to see ... that holy time is all patterned on ... the same pattern but at different levels of magnitude. The structure of the week – six days of work followed by a seventh that is holy – is mirrored in the structure of the year – six days of lesser holiness plus a seventh, Yom Kippur, of supreme holiness. And, as can be seen in two chapters’ time ([Lev. 25](#)), the same pattern appears on an even larger scale: six ordinary years followed by the year of Shemittah.

6. PRI TZADDIK – EVEN SHABBAT NEEDS TO BE MADE HOLY, JUST LIKE CHAGIM

בפרשה זו כתוב קודם פרשת המועדות “ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת” וגוי ובפירש”י “מה ענין שבת אצל מועדות? ללמדך שכל המחלל את המועדות מעלין עליו כאלו חלל את השבתות וכל המקים את המועדות, מעלין עליו כאלו קים את השבתות” -- אף שבוודאי אם לא שמר השבתות לא יועיל שמירת המועדות למה שחילל שבתות? רק הפירוש שאף ששבתות שבת בסקילה ומועדות בלאו מ”מ יש קדושה בשמירת המועדות, כמו בשמירת שבתות. ושבת הוא תחלה למקראי קודש שהוזכר שבת אחר הכתוב “אלה מועדי ה’ מקראי קודש” ואחר כך נחשבו המועדות.

וקדושת שבת קביעא מצד השי”ת מבריא את עולם -- אף שלא היה אז שומרי שבת, ואדרבה בני נח נצטוו “וַיֹּם וְלִלְיָהּ לֹא יִשְׁבְּתוּ” (בראשית ח’ כ”ב) ובני נח ששבת ח”מ (סנהדרין נ”ח ע”ב). עד שבאו האבות ושמרו את השבת עד שלא נתנה, ואחר כך נתן מתנה זו לישראל: “מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנזי ושבת שמה, אני מבקש ליתנה לישראל, לך והודיעם” (שבת י” ע”ב). אבל קדושת המועדות התחיל על ידי ישראל: פסח ביציאת מצרים, ושבועות במתן תורה, ויום הכפורים על ידי שחטאו בעגל ונמחל להם ביום הכפורים, ואחר כך סוכות זמן שמחה על ידי זה, כמו שנאמר ולקחתם וגוי’ ושמחתם וגוי’ ... וכן הסוכה על שם “כי בסוכות הושבתי את בני ישראל” וגוי’ ... וגם ר”ה נאמר בו “כי חוק לישראל הוא משפט” וגוי’ אף ש”כל באי עולם עוברין לפניו כבני מרון” (ר”ה ט”ז ע”א) מ”מ נאמר “משפט לאלקי יעקב”.

דאחר שהכניס השי”ת קדושה לישראל כמו שנאמר “כי אני ה’ מקדשכם” אז בכחם להכניס קדושה למועדות. ומ”מ גם השבת נכלל במקרא קודש, שצריך לישראל להכניס קדושה ביום השבת... והיינו דבעשרת הדברות שניות אחר הקלוקל כתוב “וזכרת כי עבד היית בארץ מצרים וגוי’ ע”כ צוד ה’ אלקיך לעשות את השבת”, שאחר החטא צריך להכניס קדושה לשבת גם מצד ישראל...

7. ABRAHAM JOSHUA HESCHEL, IN “THE SABBATH: ITS MEANING FOR MODERN MAN” (edited)

Judaism is a religion of time aimed at the sanctification of time. Unlike the space-minded man to whom time is unvaried and homogeneous, and for whom all hours are alike, the Bible keenly senses the diversified character of time. There are no two hours that are alike. Every hour is unique, and is the only one given at that moment, exclusive and endlessly precious. Judaism teaches us to be attached to holiness in time, to be attached to sacred events, and to learn how to consecrate sanctuaries that emerge from the magnificent stream of a year. The Sabbaths are our great cathedrals; and our Holy of Holies is a shrine that neither the Romans nor the Germans were able to burn; a shrine that even apostasy cannot easily obliterate: namely, the Day of Atonement. According to the ancient rabbis, it is not the observance of the Day of Atonement, but the actual Day itself, the “essence of the Day,” which, with man’s repentance, atones for the sins of man.

Jewish ritual may be characterized as the art of significant forms in time, and as the architecture of time. Most of its observances – the Sabbath, the New Moon, the festivals, the Sabbatical and the Jubilee year – depend on a certain hour of the day or season of the year. It is, for example, the evening, morning, or afternoon that brings with it the call to prayer. The main themes of faith lie in the realm of time. We remember the day of the exodus from Egypt, the day when Israel stood at Sinai; and our Messianic hope is the expectation of a particular day, and of the end of days.

8. RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS (5777) – THE DUALITY OF TIME (edited)

Alongside the holiness of place and person is the holiness of time, something Parshat Emor charts in its deceptively simple list of festivals and holy days. Time plays an enormous part in Judaism. The first thing God declared holy was a day: Shabbat, at the conclusion of creation. The first mitzvah given to the Jewish people as a whole, prior to the Exodus, was the command to sanctify time, by determining and applying the Jewish calendar (Ex. 12:1-2). And the prophets were the first people in history to see God in history, seeing time itself as the arena of the Divine-human encounter. Virtually every other religion and civilisation before and since has identified God, reality and truth with timelessness. Time in Judaism is an essential medium of the spiritual life. But there is one feature of the Jewish approach to time that has received less attention than it should: the duality that runs through its entire temporal structure. Take, for instance, the calendar as a whole. Christianity uses a solar calendar, Islam a lunar one. Judaism uses both. We count time both by the monthly cycle of the moon and the seasonal cycle of the sun.

Then consider the day. Days normally have one identifiable beginning, whether this is at nightfall or daybreak or — as in the West — somewhere between. For calendar purposes, the Jewish day begins at nightfall (“And it was evening, and it was morning, one day”). But if we look at the structure of the prayers — the morning prayer instituted by Abraham, afternoon by Isaac, evening by Jacob — there is a sense in which the worship of the day starts in the morning, not the night before.

Years, too, usually have one fixed beginning — the “new year”. In Judaism, according to the Mishnah (Rosh Hashanah 1:1), there are no less than four new years. The first of Elul is the new year for the tithing of animals. The 15th of Shevat (or the first, according to Beit Shammai) is the new year for trees. According to the Torah, the first month of the year is Nissan. But the festival we call the New Year, Rosh Hashanah, falls six months later.

Finally, Holy time itself comes in two forms. There is Shabbat and there are the festivals, and the two are announced separately. Shabbat was sanctified by God at the beginning of time for all time. The festivals are sanctified by the Jewish people to whom was given the authority and responsibility for fixing the calendar.

Even within the festivals there is a dual cycle. One is formed by the three pilgrimage festivals: Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. These are days that represent the key historic moments at the dawn of Jewish time — the Exodus, the giving of the Torah, and the 40 years of desert wandering. They are festivals of history. The other is formed by the number seven and the concept of holiness: the seventh day, Shabbat; the seventh month, Tishri, with its three festivals of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot; the seventh year, Shemitta; and the Jubilee marking the completion of seven seven-year cycles.

This second group of times (with the exception of Sukkot that belongs to both cycles) have less to do with history than with metaphysics and jurisprudence, ultimate truths about the universe, the human condition, and the laws, both natural and moral, under which we live. Each is about creation (Shabbat, a reminder of it, Rosh Hashanah the anniversary of it), divine sovereignty, justice and judgment, together with the human condition of life, death, mortality. On Yom Kippur we face justice and judgment. On Sukkot/Shmini Atzeret we pray for rain and celebrate nature with the arba minim (lulav, etrog, hadassim and aravot, the only mitzvah we do with unprocessed natural objects), and read the book of Kohelet, Tanakh's most profound meditation on mortality.

In the seventh and Jubilee years we acknowledge God's ultimate ownership of the land of Israel and the children of Israel. We let slaves go free, release debts, let the land rest, and restore most property to its original owners. All of these have to do not with God's interventions into history but with his role as Creator and owner of the universe.

Why the duality? Because God is both the God of nature and of culture. He is the God of everyone in general, and of the people of the covenant in particular. He is the Author of both scientific law (cause) and religious-ethical law (command).

We encounter God in both cyclical time, which represents the movement of the planets; and linear-historical time, which represents the events and evolution of the nation of which we are a part. This very duality gives rise to two kinds of religious leader: the prophet and the priest, and the different consciousness of time each represents.

Since the ancient Greeks, people have searched for a single principle that would explain everything, or the single point Archimedes sought at which to move the world, or the unique perspective (what philosophers call "the view from nowhere") from which to see truth in all its objectivity.

Judaism tells us there is no such point. Reality is more complicated than that. There is not even a single concept of time. At the very least we need two perspectives to be able to see reality in three dimensions, and that applies to time as well as space. Jewish time has two rhythms at once.