



פרשת בהר בחקתי
אייר תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל



HAKHEL IN THE PARSHA

In this week's double Parsha of Behar-Bechukosai there are a number of connections to Hakhel.

The Parsha begins by mentioning Har Sinai. The Rambam writes that at Hakhel, the people would listen to the words of the Torah with awe... like on the day the Torah was given at Har Sinai. Hakhel was a reexperiencing of the covenant at Sinai.

Some commentaries suggest that the elevated wooden Bimah at Hakhel was a representation of Har Sinai from where the word of Hashem issued forth.

The first Mitzvah in the Parsha is the Mitzvah of Shemittah. The Torah teaches that Hakhel took place "at the end of seven years at the time of Shemittah", immediately after the Shemittah year. (Some Meforshim learn that Hakhel took place at the beginning of the seventh year i.e. at the start of Shemittah!)

In Parshas Bechukosai we read the Tochecha - the curses and punishments that would befall the Jewish people if they fail to keep the Torah.

One of the passages read by the king at Hakhel were the blessings and curses (in Parshas Ki Savo). Reminding the people of the reward for keeping the Mitzvos and the punishments for failing to do so, was fundamental to the objective of Hakhel.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



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Gardens and Springs

This past week we celebrated Lag Baomer, the Hilulah (day of passing) of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. Even though the Hilulah is on the 18th of Iyar, we refer to the day by the count of the Omer - day 33. The Chassidic masters find different hints and allusions in the Torah to the day of Lag Baomer.

One allusion is found in Shir Hashirim (4:12) in the Pasuk גן נעול אחותי כלה גל נעול מעיין חתום - "A locked-up garden is my sister, the bride, a spring locked up, a fountain sealed". The word גל (spring) are the same letters as לג (33).

Shir Hashirim uses the metaphor of a man and woman to describe the loving and passionate relationship between Hashem and the Jewish people. The lock in this verse represents the spiritual chastity of the Jewish people - our exclusive dedication to Hashem.

Jewish marriage has two stages. The first stage is Eirusin or Kiddushin, often translated as betrothal. Whilst Kiddushin establishes an exclusive relationship, it is still a more superficial connection. Nisuin forges a deep, inner and consummated relationship. Nisuin is when husband and wife move into their shared home and join together in a state of absolute oneness.

These two stages also apply in our relationship with Hashem and are alluded to in the two metaphors in the verse; a locked-up garden and a locked-up spring.

A garden sits above ground and its beauty is openly manifest and revealed. This alludes to the initial stage of relationship forged through Kiddushin. The hidden spring, whose waters run deep below the surface, represents the deeper, inner relationship established through Nisuin.

The Giving of the Torah at Har Sinai is described as the day of Hashem's marriage to the Jewish people. This is alluded to in the verse תורה צוה לנו משה - מורשה קהלת יעקב - "the Torah that Moshe commanded us is an inheritance for the congregation of Yaakov". Our sages teach that the word מורשה (inheritance), should be read as מאורסה, a betrothed woman.

Matan Torah was only the initial stage of the relationship. After the Eirusin we become Hashem's מאורסה. Hashem gave us the revealed teachings of the Torah. This is alluded to by the revealed beauty of the garden - גן נעול.

On the verse ישקני מנשיקות פיהו, "May He kiss me with the kisses of His mouth", Rashi teaches that after having given us His Torah, when we experienced a love which is greater than all pleasures, we are assured by Him that He will appear to us once more to teach us the secret reasons (of Torah) and its hidden mysteries.

This will be the full consummation of our relationship, the deep oneness of Nisuin that will take place when Moshiach comes and Hashem reveals to us the deepest, most hidden dimensions of Torah. These are the hidden waters of the spring - גל נעול.

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai began to reveal these deep secrets of Torah, the mystical teachings of Kabbalah that unite us with Hashem on the deepest of levels. On the day of his passing he revealed deeper secrets of Torah than he had ever shared before. On Lag Baomer, we began our journey to our Nisuin with Hakadosh Baruch Hu, when the locked-up spring of hidden wisdom, will burst open and flow forth.

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| 1. Megillah 20b כל ד"ה | 9. Rambam Hilchos Temidim Umusafim 7:2, Raaviya 526. | 15. 489:11 | 36:5 |
| 2. End of Siman 489 | 10. Tosfos Menachos 86a, Rosh Pesachim 10:40, Ra"n. | 16. 489:11 | 23. 489:5 |
| 3. 489:11 | 11. See Shulchan Aruch Harav 489:2, Beis Yosef 489. | 17. 489:10 | 24. 489:2 |
| 4. In Chutz Laaretz it includes the 17th of Nissan | 12. Shulchan Aruch Harav 489:11, Mishna Berura Shaar Hatziyun 15, Levush | 18. Maaseh Rav Siman 70 | 25. 489:10 |
| 5. Mishbetzos Zahav 489:3 | 13. ibid | 19. Derush Pesach Derush 11, quoted by Ben Ish Chai in Rav Pealim | 26. Shulchan Aruch HARav 489:11 |
| 6. 489:15 | 14. Pesachim 123: | 20. Vayikra p279 | 27. Maamar Inyan Sefiras Haomer Derush 11 |
| 7. Yesod Veshoreh HaAvodah 9:8 | | 21. Acharon Shel Pesach 5751 | 28. Kabolos Shabbos, Bedtime Krias Shema and Sefiras Haomer |
| 8. Shaar Hatziyun ibid | | 22. See also Mishmeres Shalom OC | |

The Weekly Halacha Analysis

Tefillos After Sefiras Haomer

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

After counting Sefiras Haomer, it is customary to add some Tefillos and Bakashos. These include; Harachaman, Tehillim 67, Ana Bkoach and the Ribbono Shel Olam.

What is the basis for reciting these Tefillos and how are they connected to Sefiras Haomer?

Harachaman

Immediately after counting Sefiras Haomer, we offer a prayer for the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash. The source of this practise is a Tosfos in Megillah¹ that after Sefiras Haomer one should say Yehi Ratzon Sheyibaneh... May it be Your will Hashem, that the Beis Hamikdash will be rebuilt.

This is brought as Halacha by the Bach² and the Chok Yaakov³ and is also brought in the Shulchan Aruch Harav and Mishna Berura.

Shibolei Haleket asks what is the connection between Sefiras Haomer and the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash that we recite this Tefillah? Sefiras Haomer is not dependent on the Beis Hamikdash, it is a personal Mitzvah that applies in all places.

He shares an answer from his brother Rabbi Binyamin, that it is in reference to the cutting and offering of the Korban Omer which cannot be done in the absence of the Beis Hamikdash.

Shibolei Haleket presents an alternate explanation. Biblically, it is forbidden to eat from Chadash (the new year grain) until after the Korban Omer has been brought. After the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai instituted that it is forbidden to eat Chadash for the entire day of the 16th of Nissan⁴.

The Tefillah after Sefiras Haomer is a request for the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash where we will revert back to being able to eat Chadash after midday.

This explanation is brought by the Pri Megadim⁵ and Shaar Hatziyun⁶. Another explanation is that it is a general request for the reinstatement of all of the Korbanos⁷.

Mishna Berura⁸ points out that the question of the Shibolei Haleket and the answers above are only applicable according to the view that Sefiras Haomer nowadays remains a Biblical obligation⁹ independent of the Korban Omer.

However, the majority of Rishonim¹⁰ maintain that in the absence of the Korban Omer, our Sefiras Haomer is only a Rabbinic Mitzvah,

which was instituted as a Zecher L'Mikdash¹¹. According to this view, the reason we recite the Tefillah for the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash, is because then we will once again be able to fulfil the Mitzvah of Sefiras Haomer as a Mitzvah De-oraisa¹².

Nusach

There are two primary Nuschaos of this Tefillah; Tosfos¹³ writes that the Nusach of this Tefillah is Yehi Ratzon... Sheyibaneh - the same Nusach that we recite at the end of the Shemoneh Esrei. This version is also found in Machzor Vitri and Shibolei Haleket (with slight variation). This is also the opinion of many Acharonim, including; Shela¹⁴, Chok Yaakov¹⁵, Shulchan Aruch Harav¹⁶, Mishna Berura¹⁷ and was the Minhag of the Gr"m¹⁸.

The Nusach in most Siddurim is the formula הרחמן הוא יחזיר לנו עבודת בית המקדש למקומה במהרה בימינו אמן סלע, The Merciful One will restore the service of the Beis Hmikdash to its place, speedily in our days. This Nusach is found in the Avudraham. It is also recorded in Shaar Hakavanos¹⁹ and Meam Loez²⁰.

Even though the Alter Rebbe in Shulchan Aruch records the Nusach of Yehi Ratzon, in the Siddur, the Alter Rebbe selected the Nusach of Harachaman.

The Rebbe points out the difference between the two Nuschaos²¹. Yehi Ratzon is a prayerful request, asking Hashem to rebuild the Beis Hamikdash. The Harachaman is a declaration of certainty, that Hashem will restore the Avodah of the Beis Hamikdash.

Aruch Hashulchan records both Nusachos as alternatives. Siddur Yaavetz and others combine both Nusachos, saying that both should be recited²².

Lamnatzeach... Elokim Yechonenu

The Magen Avraham²³ writes that there are those who customarily recite the Mizmor "Elokim Yechonenu" (Tehillim 67) after counting Sefira. The custom is also brought in Elya Rabbah²⁴ and the Mishna Berura²⁵.

The Alter Rebbe²⁶ writes (in brackets) "there are those who, for the reasons known to them, recite Mizmor Elokim Yechonenu and Ana Bekoach and Ribono Shel Olam". The use of the words "for the reasons known to them" indicates that this as a Kabbalistic practise.

The source of reciting Tehillim 67 is from Shaar Hakavanos of Rav Chaim Vital²⁷. He writes that his

teacher, the Ariza"l, was very careful to recite the entire Perek of Tehillim, while standing.

Excluding the introductory verse, there are 49 words in this Kapitel. The fifth Posuk – ישמחו וירננו has 49 letters. Rav Chaim Vital writes that each day, the Ariza"l would have Kavanah on one of the levels of the 49 words within the Tehillah and on one of the 49 letters in the Pasuk Yismechu.

Rabbi Avraham Galanti writes that when reciting the word corresponding to that night, they should raise their voice. He quotes a tradition that one who is careful with these Kavanos, will never spend a night in prison.

The Seforim point out that there are also a total of 7 Pesukim (excluding the introductory Posuk) in this Kapitel, corresponding to the 7 weeks of Sefiras Haomer.

Ana Bekoach

This Kabbalistic Tefillah, attributed to the Tanna Rabbi Nechunia Hakaneh, also has seven verses.

Each verse has 6 words. Together with the acronym of the Roshei Teivos printed alongside the verse, this gives a total of 7 lines of 7 words, for a total of 49.

The Roshei Teivos spell out Divine names. We do not recite these letters, however it is written in Sefer Haminhagim that it is appropriate to look at the letters or to picture them in one's mind. Similar to the Tehillim, on each night of Sefirah, one should have Kavanah of one of the words.

The practice of reciting Ana Bekoach after Sefiras Haomer is also based on the writings of the Ariza"l. Chassidus explains that it is recited whenever there is a spiritual elevation²⁸.

תפילת רבי נחוניא בן הקנה

אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁמְחוּ וְיִרְנְנוּ מִיְמֵינוּ יְהוָה יִשְׁמְחוּ וְיִרְנְנוּ
קָדְשׁוֹ שְׁמַחַת לְפָנָיו שְׂמֵחָה וְיִרְנְנוּ מִיְמֵינוּ
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