

ISSUE #33

י' אייר תשפ"ד
18/05/24



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

פרשת אמור

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם, כִּי תֵבְאוּ אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם, וְקִצְרַתֶם אֶת קִצְרֵיהָ וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קִצְרֵיכֶם וכו'. וְלֶחֶם וְקֵלִי וְכֶרֶמֶל לֹא תֹאכְלוּ עַד עֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַד הַבִּיאְכֶם אֶת קֶרְבֵּן אֱלֹקֵיכֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּכֹל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם. וְסִפַּרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הַבִּיאְכֶם אֶת עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שֶׁבַע שָׁבָתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה. עַד מַמְחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחַת חֻדְשָׁה לַה'. (ויקרא כג, ט - טז)
Speak to the Bnei Yisroel and say to them: 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; it is an eternal decree for your generations in all your dwelling places. 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 parshah, we learn about the *halachos* of Chodosh. Before any new grain product may be eaten, an *omer* measure of ground barley must be brought to the Beis HaMikdash on the second day of Pesach. Once the Omer has been brought, the new harvest becomes permitted for regular consumption and usage. However, it remains forbidden to be used for *korbanos*. On Shavuos, a "מִנְחַת חֻדְשָׁה" - the Shte HaLechem - is offered, which then permits the new crop to also be used in the Beis HaMikdash.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* notes that for the new crop to be allowed for public physical consumption, all that was necessary was to bring a paltry *korban* of the Omer. However, for its usage in spiritual matters such as *korbanos*, a much more extensive process was needed. Forty-nine days of the Omer, which involve preparing to receive the Torah and distancing oneself from the impurities of Mitzrayim, had to be counted. Only then, together with a larger *offering* of the Shte HaLechem, would the new harvest become permitted for use.

This teaches a fundamental message for life. Benefiting from the physical world is not a great accomplishment and doesn't require much preparation and merit. With just a small measure of barley, the new crop becomes permitted for the whole of Klal Yisroel. However, using the world and all it contains as a medium for spirituality and connection to Hashem requires much more. It takes 49 preparatory days and the more significant offering of Shte HaLechem to enable its usage for spiritual purposes.

This lesson challenges the common attitude towards achievements in life. Many people feel a great sense of joy and accomplishment when they acquire a new physical possession or reach a new professional status. However, when they experience a spiritual milestone or success, such as being able to learn Torah or perform a *mitzvah* in its ideal manner, they often fail to recognize their

achievement and sadly don't experience the same sense of joy and accomplishment. This goes against the truth, as we learn in this week's *parshah*.

The Mishna in Pirkei Avos (4:16) states:

רבי יעקב אומר, העולם הזה דומה לפרוזדור בפני העולם הבא. התקן עצמך בפרוזדור, כדי שתכנס לטרקלין.

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 message of this Mishnah is generally understood to be that in order to receive goodness in Olam Habah, one must prepare during this life in Olam Hazeih. However, in line with the above concept, the Akeidas Yitzchak provides another dimension to this Mishnah.

If someone were to be invited to the king's palace and upon reaching the entrance hall would demand a nice comfortable chair, a fully laid meal, with a plush bed with all luxuries included, they would be considered a fool. There would be no room for complaint against the king or his household, with the sole blame being this fellow's thoughtlessness and absurdity. Obviously, the luxuries are expected to be found only in the main palace.

So too concerning luxuries and conveniences in this world, explains the Ba'al Ha'Akeida: A person who seeks a calm, peaceful life, with no anguish or worry is comparable to the visitor who wishes to find in a lobby the comfort and luxuries of a banquet hall. This world is not here as a final destination, but rather, as a vehicle to perform *mitzvos* and earn the ultimate reward in Olam Habah. Moreover, any goodness that one is granted in this world should be viewed as extra kindness since here is not the place where one should expect to receive rewards and live in comfort. He concludes, "One who internalises this fact will spare themselves much aggravation and pain when things don't go their way or they face difficulties!"

The concept is also found in Mesillas Yesharim (1), which asserts that from a purely logical perspective, it is evident that this world is not the purpose of our existence. He writes, "Our lives are limited, and how many people have a peaceful and content life? For many, life is full of sorrow and anguish, plagued by illness and disease. Even one in a thousand rarely manages to find in this world only good and pure serenity, and even if so, after 100 years or so, he leaves this world!" Life in this world was clearly established as a vehicle with which to do Hashem's will, thereby earning genuine goodness in Olam Habah.

May we internalise this dual message, which will help us both deal with life's tribulations and focus on our mission in this world. First, this world was not designed to be comfortable, and it is outlandish to even expect it to be so. Second, true achievements are in the spiritual realm, earning us true benefit in Olam Habah.

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל עה"ת 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.