



Friday, May 17

7:00 Shacharis

8:22 Candlelighting
8:25 Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, May 18

8:45 Shacharis.
*Kiddush is sponsored
by the Preyger family
on the occasion of a
yahrzeit*

7:15 Pirke Avos

8:15 Mincha

9:32 Maariv

Sunday, May 19

8:00 Shacharis

7:30 **HEBREW READING
CLASS**

10:00 Maariv

Monday, May 20

7:00 Shacharis

**The Jewish Life Cycle
part 2 of 8
- Circumcision:
Custom and
Controversy
R. Nisenbaum**

10:00 Maariv

Tuesday, May 21

7:00 Shacharis

8:00 Pirke Avos (Stoll)
10:00 Maariv

Wednesday, May 22

7:00 Shacharis

8:00 "The Prophets Still
Speak" (Stoll)
10:00 Maariv

Thursday, May 23

7:00 Shacharis

10:00 Maariv
10:15 Parsha Class

Parsha: Emor

G-d endowed certain people with special responsibilities. The kohain, or priest, was given the task of serving in the Temple. The importance of his service and his position required him to live by a higher standard. Things that were permitted to the rest of the nation were prohibited for him. For example, the kohain could not defile himself by coming in contact with a corpse of any person outside of his close family members. The Kohain Gadol, High Priest, was held to an even stricter standard and could not even contaminate himself for family members. An exception was made only for a corpse where there was no family to care for it. An explanation offered for this prohibition is because the kohain must live a holy life. Holiness involves spiritual growth, and after death no further growth is possible. Coming in contact with a lifeless body represents the antithesis of holiness.

The kohain was also limited (and still is) as to whom he could marry. He may not marry a woman who was the product of a prohibited relationship, or who had been involved in a prohibited relationship. He may also not marry a divorcee. The Kohain Gadol was restricted even further in his choice and could only marry a virgin.

Certain days of the year were also endowed with holiness—the Shabbos and other holidays. These days are sanctified through nicer dress, better food, and in general, through a more spiritual behavior than the rest of the year.

Each of the holidays was endowed with its own mitzvah, as a tool for receiving the unique spiritual influence associated with that day. The shofar is blown on Rosh Hashanah; we fast on Yom Kippur; the lulav and esrog are taken on Sukkos, etc.

Every Jew is also instructed to sanctify G-d's name, both in life and death. In life, we must live in a way that earns the admiration of the world. Profaning G-d's Name by acting immorally or improperly is a grave sin. In death, the Jew must be ready to sacrifice his life rather than denounce G-d or his belief in Judaism.

The Torah relates an incident where a person mocked the Torah and blasphemed G-d. The Torah considers blasphemy to be on par with assault and even murder. The understanding is that a person who disregards G-d can easily be led to total disregard for his fellow man, too, leading to assault and other similar sins. Accordingly, the Torah reserves the most severe forms of punishment for this offense.

Insights: Emor

You shall not desecrate My Holy Name... (Lev 22:32)

The Beis Yisrael of Ger stayed in Haifa for a period of time. He once took an early morning walk, and as he stood by the corner he waited for the pedestrian light to turn green before he crossed the street. The street was empty at that early hour, and only a couple of street workers were out. One of the workers called to the Rebbe, "Rabbi, you don't have to wait. There's nobody around now!" The Rebbe, however, continued to wait until the light changed. As he crossed he heard one worker tell the other, "Look at the Rebbe! He follows the rules even when nobody is watching!" The Rebbe turned to his assistant and said, "Did you hear that worker? We don't have much left today. All we can do is to sanctify G-d's Name and avoid desecrating it."

Did You Know?

There is a famous custom not to cut a young boy's hair until he reaches three years old. One reason offered for this custom is because it is prohibited for a male to shave the hair on the sides of his head, in the area above the mandible. (Some people have a custom to allow the hair to grow long into sidelocks, but according to Jewish law it is only required not to closely shave the hair.) The age to begin educating a child is around his third birthday, and the first haircut is thus postponed until then in order to educate the child about not shaving the sidelocks. There is a widespread custom to first cut a child's hair on Lag B'Omer. In Israel many people travel to the grave of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai to give the child his haircut. Some people cut their child's hair on Lag B'Omer even if it is a few months before the third birthday.

Thought for the week: Making things easy for ourselves is more often making easy things for ourselves. (*A Candle by Day*)

Mazel Tov

*To Rabbi Ephraim &
Chanie Nisenbaum
upon the Bar Mitzvah
of their grandson*

Raffle

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prizes in the Annual
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