

א ב י ס כ ל ת ו ר א !

May 1, 2026

THE PARSHA NEWSLETTER
OF MAIMONIDES SCHOOL

י"ד אייר תשפ"ו · אָמֶר

Two Different Yet the Same עומר's

By Talya Spira '28

אמר gives us the details surrounding the Jewish holidays, one of which being the time in between פסח and שבועות, otherwise known as the עומר. The תורה teaches about the עומר offering, where we bring the first of the barley harvest as an offering to Hashem. Immediately afterward, we are commanded in counting each night between פסח and שבועות: "וּסְפַרְתֶּם" "and you shall count after the שבת (יום טוב) from the day you bring the waved עומר sacrifice" (ויקרא כ"ג:ט"ו). Even though we no longer bring this sacrifice, we still count ספירת העומר every single year.

To understand why, it helps to look back at an earlier place in which the תורה mentions an עומר. When the Jews first left Egypt, they had no food and faced tremendous uncertainty. Hashem provided מן from heaven each day, and the measurement for each person was an עומר: "וַיִּמְדוּ בְעֹמֶר...אִישׁ לְפִי אֲכָלוּ לֶקֶטוּ" "and when they measured it by the עומר...each household had gathered as much as it needed to eat" (שמות ט"ז:י"ח). An עומר was exactly enough to sustain a person for a day. It symbolized complete dependence on Hashem. For forty years, Hashem gave them exactly what they needed, no more and no less. Later, in that same פרק, Hashem commands the Jewish people that the עומר be kept as a physical reminder for all future generations: "קְלָא הָעֹמֶר מִמֶּנּוּ לְמַשְׁמֶרֶת" "לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם לְמַעַן יֵרָאוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִדְבָּר"

"בְּהוֹצִיאִי אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם מִצְרָיִם" "Let one עומר of it be kept throughout the ages, in order that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness when I brought you out from the land of Egypt" (שמות ט"ז:ל"ב). This shows that the מן was meant not only as a physical sustenance for the Jewish people, but rather as a permanent reminder of Hashem's care and provision.

The עומר that appears in our פרשה is the reflection of the עומר of מן. In the desert, Hashem gave us our food directly. In Israel, we brought the first of our harvest back to Hashem as a symbol of gratitude and trust. If ספירת העומר is connected to the קרבן עומר, how come we still count ספירה today, when there is no בית המקדש? What does counting mean for us today? As we count these days we should think about the journey through the desert and how Hashem provides for us each and every day. We should recreate the anticipation of the receiving of the תורה by counting and we should also have a remembrance to the בית המקדש, a way to keep the מצוה alive and to remember that something is still missing. The עומר of אמור and the עומר of מן are deeply connected, one from heaven and one from the field, yet they both symbolize that everything comes from Hashem. By counting the עומר even today, we remember our journey from Egypt to ה' סיני, Hashem's miracles, the gratitude of the harvest, and the ongoing process of preparing ourselves to receive the תורה once again.

This month's issue is not sponsored! If you would like to sponsor a future month of A Bisl Torah please visit our website

To read past issues or sponsor future visit
ABISLTORAH.ORG

The Second Narrative in ויקרא

By Yaniv Kaufman-Grob '26

There are only two narrative stories in all of ויקרא: The death of נדב and אביהו and the story of the בן איש מצרי. וַיֵּצֵא...בֶּן אִישׁ מִצְרִי...וַיִּנְצְוּ בְּמַחֲנֶה...וַיִּקָּב בֶּן הָאִשָּׁה: מצרי "הַיִּשְׁרָאֵלִית אֶת הָשֵׁם וַיִּקְלֵל...וְשֵׁם אִמּוֹ שְׁלֹמִית בַּת דְּבָרִי לְמַטֵּה דָן" "and he went out...the son of an Egyptian man...and a fight broke out...and the son of the Israeli woman pronounced The Name and cursed...and the name of mother from the tribe of דן (ויקרא) "דן" (כ"ד:י"א). While this story has many ambiguities, such as, what was the fighting about and who was שְׁלֹמִית בַּת דְּבָרִי? The interpretation of the word וַיֵּצֵא determines what the story is about.

There are a few different ways of approaching what the word וַיֵּצֵא means. When a story begins with an ambiguous וַיֵּצֵא there is always a debate about how to interpret it. It could mean simply left, but with the number of ambiguities, most of the commentaries take it to mean something deeper. רש"י quotes, first, the opinion of רבי לוי. The וַיֵּצֵא is saying that he (איש) left his share in the world to come, meaning, he lost it. This takes the word וַיֵּצֵא figuratively; however, that still does not answer the other questions or the surrounding passages.

This brings רבי ברכיה, the second opinion in רש"י, to say וַיֵּצֵא means coming from the previous passage. The blasphemer said, mockingly, that the לוחם הפנים were not fit for a king since they were 9 days old (it was made on Friday and eaten on the following Shabbat). It seems that the blasphemer accepts

Hashem as The King but takes issue with this one law, which led him to pronounce G-d's name and then curse, but not curse the name of G-d. This reading again takes וַיֵּצֵא figuratively, and also addresses why it is placed here. However, רש"י seems to reject this opinion, since it still leaves the question unanswered of who was שְׁלֹמִית בַּת דְּבָרִי.

Due to each of these having unanswered questions in them רש"י chooses to interpret this differently, quoting a ברייתא, that וַיֵּצֵא means exiting משה's court of law, having just lost a case where he tried to pitch a tent with the tribe of דן (hence why it specifies his mother was from דן). He was told that he could not pitch the tent there. He left in anger and despair screaming the name of Hashem. Accepting this interpretation poses this man as an outsider who wants to be with the Jewish people but there is nowhere for him to pitch his tent. He then screams out the name of Hashem irresponsibly and is then punished for it. However, this answer leaves the surrounding context ignored and the story is too oddly placed to be ignored.

Therefore, one needs to take רבי ברכיה's reading of the story, which only left one question unanswered, why did the תורה specify שְׁלֹמִית בַּת דְּבָרִי. If one adopts the reading of רבי ברכיה then one could say that שְׁלֹמִית בַּת דְּבָרִי was mentioned to reproach her for having a child with one of the Egyptian taskmasters and functionally betraying her people. At the end of the day, while the blasphemer is certainly at fault for his actions, he is not the only one. His upbringing caused a lack of understanding for a מצוה. This shows how much impact one's family can have on their actions.

A BISL TORAH

is published weekly
at Maimonides School,
Brookline, Massachusetts



Receive A Bisl Torah
on Whatsapp

If you would like to receive A Bisl Torah
via Email, Email bisl Torah@maimonides.org

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Eitan Orkaby '27
Theo Fraenkel '28

EDITORS

Anna Szalat '28
Noah Levy '29
Joshua Jaffe '29

FACULTY ADVISOR

Rabbi Yaakov Jaffe

FOUNDERS

Binyamin Orkaby '24
Ephraim Fischer '24