

ספירת העומר בזמנינו הרב אליהו שטיינהארט

The *gemara* in .סו מנחות relates that Ameimar counted only the days of *Sefira* and not the weeks because the *mitzvah* is only זכר למקדש. We find in the *pesukim* (ויקרא כג: טו-טז) that *Sefiras HaOmer* is really done on both the weeks and on the days. Ameimar held that since nowadays our *mitzvas Sefira* is only זכר למקדש, we only count the days.

We need to understand why the fact that it is זכר למקדש changes the *mitzvah* to be only days and not also weeks. If *Chazal* were *mesaken* that we should continue to do the *mitzvah* of *Sefiras HaOmer* זכר למקדש, it would seem that we should do it the same way, being that this is the way which the *mitzvah* is done.

The Brisker Rov in *Menachos* says that we see from this *gemara* a *yesod* in *mitzvos* which are done זכר למקדש. When a *mitzvah* is set up זכר למקדש, it is a new *mitzvah*. It is not a continuation of the *mitzvah* as it was previously and as such, it does not have the same exact *dinim* or *pratim* as the original *mitzvah* had *bizman HaBayis*. That is why Ameimar says that our *mitzvas Sefira* is only to count days and not weeks.

The Brisker Rov brings a Ba'al Hama'or from the end of *Arvay Pesachim* as a *rayuh* to this *yesod*. The Ba'al Hama'or asks why we do not *bentch* “*Shehechyanu*” by *Sefira*? One of his answers is that because *Sefira* is זכר למקדש, we don't say “*Shehechyanu*.” To this the Brisker Rov asks why should that factor in whether “*Shehechyanu*” is made? If the *mitzvah* is one that we would make “*Shehechyanu*” on, then it should not matter whether it is זכר למקדש or not. The Brisker Rov says that from this Ba'al Hama'or we see again that a *mitzvah* being established זכר למקדש means that it is a new *mitzvah* and not a continuation of the original *mitzvah*, and therefore one does not make a “*Shehechyanu*.”

He goes further and brings a *rayuh* from *Maseches Rosh Hashana*: R. Yochanan ben Zakai was *mesaken* that nowadays we take the *arba minim* all seven days of Sukkos זכר למקדש. (In the times of the Beis Hamikdosh, only in the Beis Hamikdosh did Klal Yisroel take them all Sukkos; in the *gevulin* they were taken only the first day. Tosafos in *Maseches Sukkah* says that in our *mitzvah* of taking *arba minim* all seven days, it is OK if they are incomplete or not “*Lachem*.” Even though those are things which are *me'akev* on the first day, for the rest of Sukkos they are not an issue because this *mitzvah* is זכר למקדש. Again, the Brisker Rov points out that if *Chazal* are telling us to continue doing that *mitzvah* of the first day, then why should it have any exceptions to the rules of the original *mitzvah*? He therefore says that *veist ois* we see from here that a *mitzvah* made זכר למקדש is a new *mitzvah* and is not contingent or bound by the same rules as the original *mitzvah*.

This is the *yesod* and *rayos* of the Brisker Rov, that *mitzvos* made זכר למקדש are new entities and not continuations of the original *mitzvos*.

One question we can ask is why do we not say “*Shehechyanu*” on *Sefira* just because it is a new *mitzvah*? Even if it is not the original *Sefiras HaOmer*, they were still *mesaken* to do the *mitzvah* of *Sefiras HaOmer*. Why does it not deserve a “*Shehechyanu*?” Additionally, we see that even this type of “new *mitzvah* זכר למקדש” can have a “*Shehechyanu*,” as is clear from *arba minim*. The *halacha* is that if one forgot to *bentch* “*Shehechyanu*” when he took the *arba minim* on the first day, or if the first day of Sukkos was Shabbos and

he therefore did not take them, he still makes “*Shehechyanu*,” when he remembers, even during the rest of Sukkos. Why, then, should *Sefiras HaOmer* not get a “*Shehechyanu*?” What is the *peshat* of the Brisker Rov?

There seems to be a difference within the category of “new *mitzvos* made *למקדש*”. In truth, there seems to be a surface-level difference between the *mitzvah* *למקדש* of *Sefiras HaOmer* and that of *arba minim*. The *cheftzah* of *mitzvas Sefiras HaOmer*, the action performed, has changed from the original *mitzvah*. The original *mitzvah* was to count the days and the weeks, but this new *mitzvah* is to count only days, not weeks. *Arba minim*, however, remains that same *cheftzah hamitzvah*. *Chazal* instructed to take the same four *minim*, exactly like the original *mitzvah*. Even though some of the details are different, they still did not change the action of the *mitzvah*.

Why is there this difference in the *cheftzah hamitzvah* by *mitzvas Sefiras HaOmer* *למקדש*? The Shulchan Aruch HaRav (סי' תפט) says that after we count *Sefiras HaOmer* we recite the יהי רצון for rebuilding the Beis Hamikdosh. [Tosafos in *Maseches Megilla* (דף כ:) brings this down as well.] The reason we say this is because nowadays we only count *Sefira* *למקדש* and there is really no “עשיית מצוה” at all. Originally, the *Sefiras HaOmer* was to count from the *Omer*, but now we don’t have the *Korban Omer* so our *Sefira* is not that *mitzvah* at all, it is merely what *Chazal* were *mesaken* *למקדש*. Therefore, we say this יהי רצון as a *tefilla* to regain the *mitzvah*.

We see that the Shulchan Aruch HaRav learns that it is impossible to do the *mitzvas Sefiras HaOmer* and the *Sefira* which we do is something else entirely. *Chazal* were *mesaken* that we should do an action *זכר למקדש*, a *cheftzah hamitzvah* of *זכר למקדש* and nothing more.

Arba minim is different. We still perform the action of the original *mitzvah* by taking the same *dalet minim*. This yields that the *mitzvah* of *arba minim* which is *זכר למקדש* is still the same *mitzvah* as the original *arba minim*. While it is not a continuation of the original *mitzvah*, it is still the same *cheftzah hamitzvah*. According to the explanation of the Shulchan Aruch HaRav, there is no *inyan* to say a יהי רצון for *mitzvas arba minim* because it is the same *cheftzah hamitzvah* as we had in the Beis Hamikdosh.

Arba minim retains a “*Shehechyanu*” because it is the same *cheftzah hamitzvah* as the original *mitzvas netilas lulav*. *Sefiras HaOmer*, on the other hand, only deserves a “*Shehechyanu*” if it would replicate the original *mitzvah*. The Ba’al Hama’or is saying that it does not get “*Shehechyanu*” because it is not even a *mitzvas Sefiras HaOmer*, it is a new and different *mitzvah* entirely, a mere *זכר בעלמא*.

We see from here how *mitzvas Sefiras HaOmer* is closely connected to the *Korban Omer*, to the extent that we cannot even do the *mitzvah* because we don’t have the *Korban*. It could be that the reason we count from the *Korban HaOmer* is because it is the *korban* where a person recognizes that his possessions are not from himself, rather Hakadosh Boruch Hu gave them to him. The *Korban Omer* expresses a *מדת הבטחון* that a person has.

Chazal say that Hakadosh Boruch Hu told us, “In the *Midbar*, I gave each and every one of you an *Omer* (referencing the *mon*), therefore now all of you must bring Me one *Omer*.” We see that the *Korban HaOmer* is connected to the *mon*, whose whole *inyan* was Hakadosh Boruch Hu sustaining us with food *min haShomayim*. Again, that represents a person’s *מדת הבטחון*.

In order for us to be able to be *mekabel* the Torah we must have this *מדת הבטחון*. A person has to be comfortable at times not to be *mishtadel*, to take off some time or set aside time for learning. A person has to be willing to spend the money to do the *mitzvos*. In order to be able to do all of that one has to have this *מדת הבטחון*, and Hakadosh Boruch Hu directed us to count *Sefira* to ingrain this *midda* in ourselves for *Kabolat HaTorah*.