

**Tell a story**  
**Parshah Emor**  
**by Julie Zhuk on 2023-05-06**

**Comments**

---

This week's parsha falls on the first Shabat in the month of May. Before we get into what the story of the parsha is about, one main focus it has is Jews blessing the food they eat. We learn from this parsha that we don't own anything. Ultimately, everything comes from G-d. The food we have on the table comes from G-d and that is why we say a blessing over the food He provides for us. From the start of the parsha, G-d tells Moses how to give instructions to the Kohanim. Moses tells the Kohanim it is crucial that they stay pure, and not become impure in any way. The only way the kohanim could keep up with their job was if they stayed pure. When the kohanim were pure, they were considered to be at a very high level. Especially in consideration of the others around them. The kohanim told the other people who were not on such a high level the importance of staying pure and not becoming impure in any way.

This parsha compares the kohanim to parents. Parents are important to their children, for one thing, they are raising them. The parsha tells us that parents cannot expect children to simply do what they say. Children are always watching what the older generation, their parents, and anyone older than them is doing. Children will follow in their parents' ways, so it is crucial for parents to raise their children right. Whatever parents are practicing, their children will learn to do this as well. When speaking about parents raising their children, the parsha highly focuses on teaching them to become generous towards others. In Hebrew a word for this is, being a mensch. Parents are the primary instructors when it comes to values and ethics. If parents can educate their children to be kind and generous towards others when they are at home, children will pick this trait up at school too.

The parsha focuses highly on parents being authentic when raising their children. Eventually, those children will grow up and have their own children. The new generation of children will grow up and be authentic with everything they teach their children. Parents have to be successful role models who practice what they preach. They have to educate by example. This week's parsha has to do with the Kohen and his property. There are laws that limit who can partake in the consecrated items. These laws are pertaining to the kohanim in the Bais Hamikdash. There were many sacrifices offered in the temple. These sacrifices produced a lot of meat and the meat was considered to be sacred. From the Torah we learn that only a kohen was allowed to eat any meat that was given as a sacrifice. There was a sharp prohibition for anyone that was not a kohen to eat this meat that was used as a sacrifice.

When we say a blessing over food, we realize that this food had originally belonged to G-d. A kohen's servant can benefit from the holy items that belonged to his master. It is important for us to say a blessing over the food we eat. We are reminded that we are G-d's servants. By blessing the food, we are reminded how we can enjoy the world we are living in. By blessing the food, we are not just asking for permission to eat. We are

making a declaration that there is not anything that does not belong to Him. Everything we use in our everyday lives, our keys, wallet, phone, cars, etc had originally been part of a grand bank account that belonged to G-d. Everything we have belongs to something greater than ourselves. It belongs to something that encompasses the entire universe and beyond. This parsha teaches us that nothing is really ours, but at the same time, it is ours to use. We are all G-d's belongings. The things He gives us to use or have access to is allowing us to partake of His world to our heart's content.

---