

## אמור

There is a מחלוקת among the Rishonim whether the mitzvah of **ספירת העומר** is **מן התורה**, or only **מדרבנן**. We start counting on the second day of Pesach, the day the **קרבן העומר** was brought. Today, however, we don't have the **בית המקדש** and we can't bring the **קרבן העומר**. Therefore perhaps, the whole mitzvah of **ספירת העומר** can't be fulfilled **מן התורה**. The Sefer Hachinuch is of the opinion that the mitzvah today is only **מדרבנן**. This would seem difficult to understand based on the Chinuch's well known explanation for the mitzvah of **ספירת העומר** We count the days until Shevuos to show our great desire and longing for **מתן תורה**. What connection does **ספירת העומר** have to do with the **קרבן העומר** and the **בית המקדש**?

Rav Mordechai Gifter זצ"ל, Rosh Yeshivas Telz, explained it in the following way. The mitzvah of **ספירת העומר** is not merely to show our love and desire for Torah, but rather it is a yearning specifically for **קבלת התורה**, when we received the Torah on Shevuos. This manifested itself in the **בית המקדש** as well. The Ramban writes in the beginning of **פרשת תרומה** that the same **השראת השכינה**, Divine Presence, that was at Matan Torah, continued in the Mishkan and the **בית המקדש** as well. When Klal Yisrael had the **בית המקדש**, they had a special **סיעתא דשמיא** in their learning. It was as if they had a constant miniature **קבלת התורה**. As long as they had the **בית המקדש** they were able to appreciate firsthand **הר סיני מעמד** and could relate to the mitzvah of **ספירת העומר**. Once the **בית המקדש** was destroyed and the **שכינה** was removed from our midst, we no longer were able to properly fulfill the mitzvah.

The Rishonim at the end of Pesachim question why we don't say a **ברכת שחינו** for **ספירת העומר**. One explanation given is that since it is not a mitzvah **מן התורה** rather it's only a **זכר למקדש**, it is lacking in the **שמחה** for the mitzvah. On the contrary, it is a painful reminder that we are missing the **בית המקדש**. From **ספירת העומר** we can appreciate even greater the absence of the **בית המקדש**. Not only are we unable to bring **קרבנות**, we are also lacking the **שכינה** and that special **סיעתא דשמיא** in Torah that was present when we were privileged to have the **בית המקדש**. When we count the Omer we long for the coming of Moshiach to bring back all that we have lost.

Have a good Shabbos.

Rabbi Yitzchok Davis  
Kollel Merkaz Hatorah Beverly Hills, CA

*Sponsored by Sanders & Stein Carpet Company*

973-472-2363 \* 201-692-9368