

May 1-2, 2026

טו אייר תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 7:34 PM

30th Day of the **Omer**

**Parashat Emor** – Leviticus 21:1-24:23 אמור  
Stone – p 672  
Hertz – p 513  
Etz Hayim – p 717

**Haftarah** – Ezekiel 44:15-31 יחזקאל מד:טו-לא  
Stone – p 1176  
Hertz – p 528  
Etz Hayim – p 735

Kiddush following services is  
sponsored by the congregation

**Shabbat** ends 8:35 PM

### TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - [Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com](mailto:Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com)

Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director -  
[traditionalcong@gmail.com](mailto:traditionalcong@gmail.com)

#### WEEKDAY AND **SHABBAT** SERVICES

Tuesday - 6:30 PM

Shabbat - 9:30 AM

Board of Directors:

Governance Committee:

Florence Schachter, Chair

Marty Levy, Vice-Chair

Ken Bohm, Ellis Frohman, Ron Green,

Dina Rinder, Mindy Strauss

Ellis Frohman, Financial Vice President

Mark Weinstein, Ritual Vice President

Marty Levy/Mindy Strauss,

Education Co-Vice Presidents

Dina Rinder, Membership Vice President

Steven Puro, Administration Vice President

Chris Brown/Justin Zeid, Building & Grounds

Co-Vice Presidents

Ron Green, Fundraising Vice President

Barbara Levin, Treasurer

Mimi Levy, Secretary

Past Presidents:

Kenneth H. Bohm, Phil Brick

Members at Large:

Maureen Brodsky

Stanley Estrin

Bill Gold

Gary Golden z"l

Jack Heller

Sid Levin

Ari Levy

Carol Max

Florence Schachter

*We welcome new members!*

If you or someone you know would like to receive  
membership information,  
please contact our office at 314-576-5230  
or [traditionalcong@gmail.com](mailto:traditionalcong@gmail.com)

# On This Week's Parashah - Emor

In Parshat Emor, the Torah presents a unique mitzvah that prohibits slaughtering a mother animal and her offspring on the same day: "An ox or a sheep, you shall not slaughter it and its young on the same day."

According to the Talmud and as codified by Maimonides et al, the prohibition applies when a mother animal and her offspring—whether male or female—are both ritually slaughtered on the same calendar day, regardless of who performs the slaughter or where it takes place. It applies only to kosher domestic animals (cattle, sheep, and goats), and only the mother-offspring pair, not the father.

What is the reason behind this commandment? Various classic commentators have offered different explanations.

## 1. Spare the Mother's Suffering

Maimonides explains that the mitzvah is based on the principle of avoiding animal suffering (tza'ar ba'alei chayim). The Torah seeks to spare the mother animal from the anguish of seeing her offspring slaughtered. Maimonides argues that there is no essential difference between the emotional bond of a human mother and that of an animal mother—they both have natural love and mercy toward their young. Therefore, this act would be inhumane.

This view is also found in the Midrash: Why is a baby circumcised on the eighth day? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, has compassion on him, granting him time until he gains strength. And just as G-d's mercy extends to human beings, so too does His mercy extend to animals. From where is this derived? As it is written: "And from the eighth day onward, it shall be accepted as a sacrifice." And not only that, but G-d also said: "You shall not slaughter it and its offspring on the same day," etc.

Bechor Shor concurs and adds that this prohibition applies only to the mother and not the father, precisely because the maternal bond is stronger. A mother's emotional connection to her offspring is deeper, and the Torah's concern lies with the pain she might experience.

## 2. Cultivating Compassion

Ibn Ezra offers a different perspective: While others see this mitzvah as an expression of compassion toward animals, Ibn Ezra emphasizes its role in shaping human character. One who is capable of slaughtering both a mother and her young on the same day risks becoming emotionally desensitized, gradually dulling their sense of mercy. Such behavior can lead to the development of cruel and callous traits, undermining the Torah's goal of refining human character through even the most technical of mitzvot.

## 3. Preserving Species

Nachmanides agrees with Ibn Ezra's reasoning and also suggests an additional explanation. In his view, slaughtering both the mother and the offspring in one day resembles eradicating an entire species. If such behavior became widespread, it could lead to extinction. The Torah, which values the preservation of creation, forbids this to ensure that species are not wiped out.

## 4. A Hidden Reason

Some understand this mitzvah to ultimately be beyond human understanding. It may fall into the category of chukim—commandments whose rationale is hidden from us. Our role is to observe the mitzvah out of faith and submission to Divine will, even if we do not grasp its logic. The Torah, therefore, concludes: You shall keep My commandments and perform them. I am the L-rd. You shall not desecrate My Holy Name. I shall be sanctified amidst the children of Israel. I am the L-rd Who sanctifies you, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, to be a G-d to you. I am the L-rd.

The emphasis is on "I am the L-rd"—the Creator who understands the nature of all beings and whose wisdom exceeds human understanding. G-d reminds us that we accept His commandments because He demonstrated His power when He took us out of Egypt with wonders and miracles—whether or not we understand the reasoning behind a mitzvah is irrelevant.

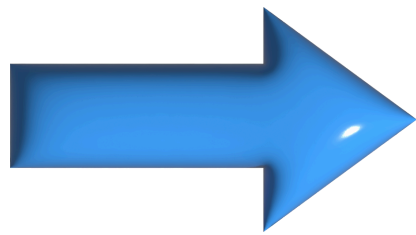
## 5. Preventing the Desecration of G-d's Name

The Rebbe, however, understood this mitzvah in line with Maimonides' explanation—based on the Midrash and Zohar—as a rational, ethical law rooted in compassion. Since it directly follows the verse commanding that a newborn remain with its mother for seven days, both are seen as expressions of mercy, intended to prevent causing emotional distress to the animal.

Accordingly, the Rebbe offers a divergent reading of the concluding verses. Because this is a moral law that even non-Jews recognize, the Torah concludes with, "You shall keep My commandments"—referring specifically to rational mitzvot—and "You shall not desecrate My holy Name", teaching that failure to uphold such universally understood ethics can result in a chilul Hashem—a desecration of G-d's Name—in the eyes of the nations.

**Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Mordechai Rubin**

*Rabbi Rubin is a content editor and staff writer at Chabad.org. He studied advanced rabbinics at yeshivot in the U.K. and U.S., and lives in Pittsburgh with his wife Devorah, and their five children.*



# Tikkun Leil Shavuot

Thursday,  
5/21/26 7:00 PM

Register at:

<https://bit.ly/3QBK5uB>

and join us!



Traditional Congregation and Congregation B'nai Amoona  
invite you to join us for

## “Bites & Bite-Size Learning”

Thursday, May 21, 2026

7:00 PM

at Traditional, 12437 Ladue Rd, STL

Join us for Shavuot Services,  
Learning with our Rabbis,  
and Delicious Dairy Treats  
(yes, there will be cheesecake!)

Please register at:

<https://bit.ly/3QBK5uB>



*We look forward to seeing you!*

Questions or need help registering?

Contact Marian 314-576-5230 or

Liessa 314-576-9990 ext 116

### PRAYER

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer invites me to an adventure in human values.*

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer opens the door that leads to all humankind.*

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer inspires me to be one with the Parent of the universe.*

*Why do I pray? – Because I am frail and need strength;  
I am troubled and need comfort; and being proud, I need humility.*

*Why do I pray? – Because having entered the world as a Jew by birth, I want to leave it a Jew by worth.*

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer respects my mind, purifies my heart, exalts my spirit and sanctifies my life.*

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer leads me out of myself into the broad places where all mortals live,  
and unto the high places where truth and righteousness abide.*

*Why do I pray? – Because prayer leads me out of “spiritual poverty.” Just as there is material poverty in food,  
clothing and shelter; so is there spiritual poverty where the deficiency is in spiritual things such as prayer,  
knowledge of Torah, observance of the mitzvot, and the practice of good deeds.*

**From Morrie Matlof (adapted)**

### THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything, but they make the most of everything.

**Sam Cawthorn**