

BEHAR-BECHUKOTAI

Yovel, Sefirat Ha'Omer and the Journey OF Happiness

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Leviticus 25:8-11

(8) You shall count off seven weeks of years—seven times seven years—so that the period of seven weeks of years gives you a total of forty-nine years. (9) Then you shall sound the horn loud; in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month—the Day of Atonement—you shall have the horn sounded throughout your land (11) That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, neither shall you reap the aftergrowth or harvest the untrimmed vines,

ויקרא כ"ה:ח'-י"א

(ח) וּסְפַרְתָּ לְךָ שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים שִׁבְעַת פְּעָמִים וְהָיוּ לְךָ יָמֵי שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת הַשָּׁנִים תִּשְׁעַת יָרֵבְעִים שָׁנָה: (ט) וְהֶעֱבַרְתָּ שׁוֹפָר תְּרוּעָה בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּעָשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ בְּיוֹם הַכְּפָרִים תִּעֲבִירוּ שׁוֹפָר בְּכָל־אֲרָצְכֶם: (יא) יוֹבֵל ה' וְאִשְׁנַת הַחֲמִשִּׁים שָׁנָה תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם לֹא תִזְרְעוּ וְלֹא תִקְצְרוּ אֶת־סִפְיָחֶיהָ וְלֹא תִבְצְרוּ אֶת־נִזְרֶיהָ:

Leviticus 23:15-16

(15) And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering—the day after the sabbath—you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete: (16) you must count until the day after the seventh week—fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the LORD.

ויקרא כ"ג:ט"ו-ט"ז

(טו) וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשָּׁבֹת מִיּוֹם הַבִּיאָתְכֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַת שָׁבָתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תִּהְיֶינָה: (טז) עַד מַמְחֲרַת הַשָּׁבֹת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה:

Leviticus 23:9-11

(9) The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: (10) Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. (11) He shall elevate the sheaf before the LORD for acceptance on your behalf; the priest shall elevate it on the day after the sabbath.

Rashi on Leviticus 23:11:1

(1) והניף AND HE SHALL WAVE [THE OMER] — Every form of the root נוף used in connection with sacrifices signifies that one moves the latter about both to the 4 directions and brings them back towards himself (מוליך ומביא) and upwards and downwards (מעלה ומוריד); he moves it about to the different directions to prevent (i. e. the act was symbolical of preventing) destructive winds, he moves it about upwards and downwards to keep away injurious dews (cf. Rashi on Exodus 29:24) (Menachot 62a).

ויקרא כ"ג:ט'-י"א

(ט) וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:
(י) דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֲלֵהֶם כִּי-תֵבְאוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וּקְצַרְתֶּם אֶת-קְצִירָהּ
וְהֵבֵאתֶם אֶת-עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית
קְצִירְכֶם אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן: (יא) וְהִנִּיף
אֶת-הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם
מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יְנִיפֶנּוּ הַכֹּהֵן:

רש"י על ויקרא כ"ג:י"א:א

(א) והניף. כָּל תְּנוּפָה מוּלִיךְ
וּמְבִיא מַעְלָה וּמוֹרִיד, מוּלִיךְ
וּמְבִיא לַעֲצֵר רוּחוֹת רָעוֹת, מַעְלָה
וּמוֹרִיד לַעֲצֵר טְלָלִים רָעִים
(מנחות ס"ב):

ליקוטי הלכות, אורח חיים, הלכות ציצית ג'י"א

Likutei Halachot, Orach Chaim, Laws of Fringes 3:11

(א) וְזֶה בְּחִיַּת סְפִירַת הָעֵמֶר שֶׁמְבִיאִין עֹמֵר שְׁעוּרִים תִּכְףּ בְּיוֹם שְׁנֵי שָׁל פֶּסַח וְאַחַר כָּךְ סוֹפְרִין שִׁבְעַת שַׁבָּתוֹת מ"ט יָמִים כְּדֵי לְצֵאת עַל-יְדֵי זֶה מִטְּמֵאת מִצְרַיִם, כִּי הִנֵּפֶת הָעֵמֶר שְׁעוּרִים בְּכָל הַשָּׁשָׁה קְצוּוֹת לְמַעְלָה וּלְמַטָּה וּבִד' רוּחוֹת שֶׁהֵם כָּלֵל גְּבוּל הַמָּקוֹם זֶה בְּחִיַּת שְׁמַעְלִין וּמְקַשְׂרִין, בְּחִיַּת הַמָּקוֹם, בְּחִיַּת הו' קְצוּוֹת לְהַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם לְמִקְוֵמוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, כִּי שְׁעוּרִים, זֶה בְּחִיַּת הַצְּמִצּוּם שֶׁל כָּל הַדְּיָנִים, כְּמוֹבָא בְּסִפְרֵים וְזֶה בְּחִיַּת עֹמֵר שְׁעוּרִים לְשׁוֹן מִדָּה וְצְמִצּוּם וְזֶה בְּחִיַּת מָקוֹם, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִיַּת צְמִצּוּם כַּנ"ל וְעַל-יְדֵי הִנֵּפֶת הָעֵמֶר שְׁעוּרִים בְּכָל הַשָּׁשָׁה קְצוּוֹת בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ עַל-יְדֵי זֶה מְקַשְׂרִין וּמַעְלִין אֶת הַמָּקוֹם אֶת בְּחִיַּת הו' קְצוּוֹת וְאֶת כָּל הַצְּמִצּוּמִים לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם, כִּי זֶה בְּחִיַּת כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה הַקְּרִבָּנוֹת שֶׁהִיא בְּבֵית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ, כִּי הַבֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ הוּא בְּבְחִיַּת מַעֲט מַחֲזִיק אֶת הַמְרַבָּה שֶׁשָּׂרְשׁוֹ מְבַחֲיַת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמְרוּ רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוֹרָנוּם לְבִרְכָה (אָבוֹת פֶּרֶק ה'), עוֹמְדִים צְפוּפִים וּמְשַׁתְּחוּיִם רוּחִים וְלֹא אָמַר אָדָם לְחַבְרוֹ צֵר לִי הַמָּקוֹם שֶׁאֵלִין בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם

ליקוטי הלכות, אורח חיים, הלכות ציצית ג'ט"ו

Likutei Halachot, Orach Chaim, Laws of Fringes 3:15

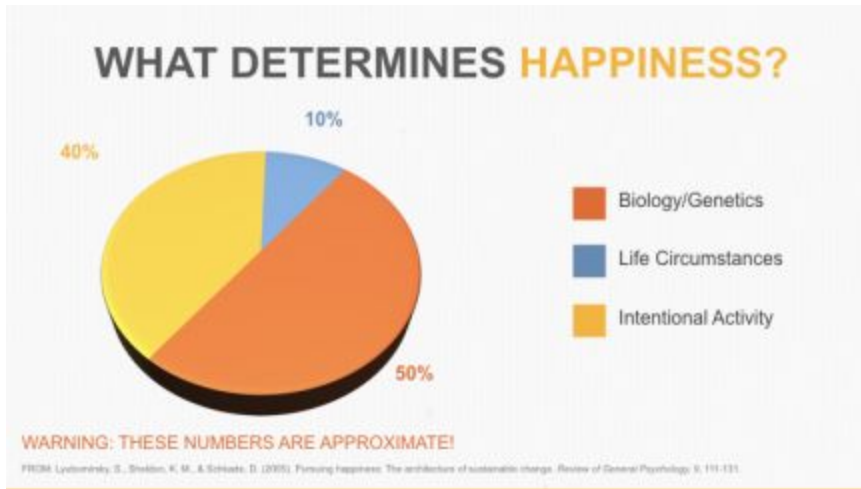
(ב) וְזֶה בְּחִיַּת סְפִירַת הָעֵמֶר, שֶׁסוֹפְרִין הַיָּמִים לְעֹמֵר כְּדֵי לְצֵאת עַל-יְדֵי זֶה מִזְדוּהַמַּת מִצְרַיִם, כִּי כָּל מַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם הֵם בְּזִמְן וּבְמָקוֹם וְשֵׁם עֵקֶר אַחִיזַת הַסְטָרָא אַחֲרָא, אֲבָל הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ הוּא, כְּבִיכּוֹל, לְמַעְלָה מִהַמָּקוֹם, לְמַעְלָה מִהַזְּמַן וְשֵׁם בְּבְחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִהַמָּקוֹם לְמַעְלָה מִהַזְּמַן הוּא כָּלֵל טוֹב..... כִּי הוּא יִתְבָּרַךְ, כְּבִיכּוֹל, לְמַעְלָה מִהַזְּמַן.... וְעַל-כֵּן אַחַר הִנֵּפֶת הָעֵמֶר, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִיַּת שְׁמַעְלִין וּמְקַשְׂרִין בְּחִיַּת הַמָּקוֹם לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם, אֲזַי מִתְחִילִין לְסַפֵּר הַיָּמִים.... וְעַל-כֵּן סוֹפְרִין הַיָּמִים לְעֹמֵר כְּדֵי לְהַעֲלוֹת וּלְקַשֵּׁר בְּחִיַּת הַזְּמַן, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִיַּת סְפִירָה וּמִנִּין כַּנ"ל, לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִהַזְּמַן, לְמַעְלָה מִהַמָּקוֹם.... וְעַל-כֵּן סוֹפְרִין אֶת הַיָּמִים לְעֹמֵר, כִּי עֵקֶר הוּא הִנֵּפֶת הָעֵמֶר, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִיַּת שְׁמַגְבִּיָּהּ אֶת הַמָּקוֹם לְבְּחִיַּת מְקוֹמוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם כַּנ"ל, כִּי זֶה הָעֵקֶר לְטַהַר אֶת הַמָּקוֹם, כִּי הַמָּקוֹם הוּא תִּכְףּ הָעֵשִׂיָה כַּנ"ל, כִּי הַזְּמַן הִיא בְּדִקּוֹת יוֹתֵר מִן הַמָּקוֹם, כִּי הַזְּמַן אֵינוֹ נִתְפָּס וְעַל-כֵּן הָעֵקֶר הוּא הַמָּקוֹם, שֶׁהוּא בְּחִיַּת עֵשִׂיָה בְּיוֹתֵר, שֶׁזֶה גוֹרֵם לְחִטָּא ח"ו, כְּשֶׁאֵינוֹ זוֹכֵה לְעֵמֶד בְּנִסְיוֹן בְּמִקְוֵמוֹ כַּנ"ל. וְעַל-כֵּן כְּשֶׁמְטַהְרִין אֶת בְּחִיַּת הַמָּקוֹם עַל-יְדֵי הִנֵּפֶת הָעֵמֶר וְעַל-יְדֵי זֶה עוֹלִין לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַמָּקוֹם, עַל-יְדֵי זֶה מִמִּילָא עוֹלִין וְנִתְקַשְׂרִין כָּל הַיָּמִים לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן הַזְּמַן, וְעַל-כֵּן סוֹפְרִין הַיָּמִים לְעֹמֵר, כִּי טַהֲרַת הַיָּמִים, דְּהֵינּוּ לְקַשְׂרָם לְבְּחִיַּת לְמַעְלָה מִן

הזמן, הוא על-ידי הנפת העמר

ליקוטי הלכות, אורח חיים, הלכות ציצית ג'כ"ה

Likutei Halachot, Orach Chaim, Laws of Fringes 3:25

ועל-ידי הנפת עמר שעורים ועל-ידי ספירת העמר, על-ידי זה מרימין בְּחִינַת הַמָּקוֹם
וְהַזְמַן לְשֵׁרֵשׁוֹ לְבְּחִינַת לְמַעְלָה מִהַמָּקוֹם, לְמַעְלָה מִהַזְמַן וְשֵׁם נִמְתַּק הַכֹּל וְכוּ' כַּנִּל
עַד שְׂזוּכִין עַל-יְדֵי זֶה לְיוֹם הַחֲמִשִּׁים, שֶׁהוּא חֵג הַשְּׁבוּעוֹת זְמַן מִתֵּן תּוֹרָתְנוּ, שְׂאֵז
יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמַעְלָה מִהַמְּלָאכִים עַל-יְדֵי קְבֻלַּת הַתּוֹרָה חֲמֻדָּה גְּנוּזָה שֶׁלֹּא נִתְּנָה לְמַלְאכִים
כִּי אִם לָנוּ



Lyubomirsky, Sonja. The How of Happiness (pp. 21-22). Penguin Publishing Group.

Perhaps the most counterintuitive finding is that as the chart shows, only about 10 percent of the variance in our happiness levels is explained by differences in life circumstances or situations—that is, whether we are rich or poor, healthy or unhealthy, beautiful or plain, married or divorced, etc.. If

with a magic wand, we could put all hundred moviegoers into the same set of circumstances (same house, same spouse, same place of birth, same face, same aches and pains), the differences in their happiness levels would be reduced by a measly additional 10 percent.

A great deal of science backs up this conclusion. For example, a well-known study demonstrated that the richest Americans, those earning more than ten million dollars annually, report levels of personal happiness only slightly greater than the office staff and blue-collar workers they employ. And although married people are happier than single ones, the effect of marriage on personal happiness is actually quite small; for example, in sixteen countries, 25 percent of married people and 21 percent of singles described themselves as “very happy.”

This discovery that the circumstances of our lives (like income and marital status) have such little bearing on our well-being is astonishing to many of us.... It may be hard to believe that such things as riches, beauty, and perfect health have only a short-term and limited influence on achieving happiness, but the evidence is formidable, and I offer several intriguing explanations for it later in this book. **If we can accept as true that life circumstances are not the keys to happiness, we’ll be greatly empowered to pursue happiness for ourselves.**

**Ben-Shahar, Tal. Happier (p. 19-20, 27, 71).
McGraw-Hill Education.**

Being a hard worker, or a high achiever, is not synonymous with being a rat racer; there are supremely happy people who work long hours and dedicate themselves to their schoolwork or to their profession. What differentiates rat racers is their inability to enjoy what they are doing—and their persistent belief that once they reach a certain destination, they will be happy.

Once we arrive at our destination, once we attain our goal, we mistake the relief that we feel for happiness. The weightier the burden we carried on our journey, the more powerful and pleasant is our experience of relief. When we mistake these moments of relief for happiness, we reinforce the illusion that simply reaching goals will make us happy.

While there certainly is value in relief—it is a pleasant experience and it is real—it should not be mistaken for happiness...The experience of relief is also temporary.

Attaining lasting happiness requires that we enjoy the journey on our way toward a destination we deem valuable. Happiness is not about making it to the peak of the mountain nor is it about climbing aimlessly around the mountain; happiness is the experience of climbing toward the peak.

...**the mere existence of goals is not sufficient.** The goals need to be meaningful and the journey they take us on needs to be pleasurable for them to bring about a significant increase in our happiness.

Exercise

What goals have provided you with the most happiness in the past, in terms of facilitating a pleasurable as well as meaningful journey? What goals do you believe will do the same for you in the future?

Ben-Shahar, Tal. Happier (p. 152-154). McGraw-Hill Education.

Simplify

Time pressure is pervasive and, to some extent, accounts for the culture wide increase in rates of depression....

What can we do, then, to enjoy our lives more despite the fast-paced rat-race environment so many of us live in? The answer to this question contains both bad news and good news. The bad news is that, unfortunately, there are no magic bullets—or magic pills. **We must simplify our lives; we must slow down. The good news is that simplifying our lives, doing less rather than more, does not have to come at the expense of success.**

Time is a limited resource, and there are too many competing demands on this limited resource. Our immoderate busyness, the stress so many of us experience so much of the time, makes us unhappy across many areas of our lives. Researchers Susan and Clyde Hendrick point to the importance of simplifying for a healthy relationship: "If we can help people to simplify their lives, thus reducing their stress levels, it is very likely that people's relationships (including love and sex) would be enriched greatly. Moreover, the positive aspects of their lives would be enriched accordingly."

Psychologist Tim Kasser shows in his research that **time affluence is a consistent predictor of well-being, whereas material affluence is not. Time affluence is the feeling that one has sufficient time to pursue activities that are personally meaningful, to reflect, to engage in leisure. Time poverty is the feeling that one is constantly stressed, rushed, overworked, behind.**

All we need to do is look around us—and often within ourselves—to realize the pervasiveness of time poverty in our culture.¹ To raise our levels of well-being, there is no way around simplifying our lives. This means safeguarding our time, learning to say "no" more often—to people as well as opportunities—which is not easy. It means prioritizing, choosing activities that we really, really want to do, while letting go of others. Fortunately, though, doing less does not necessarily entail compromising on our success.

Ben-Shahar, Tal. Happier (p. 155). McGraw-Hill Education.

Less is More

Time pressure leads to frustration, and when we're frustrated or experience other negative emotions, our thinking becomes more constricted, narrower, and less broad and creative.

Moreover, Amabile found that people are unaware of this phenomenon and **live under the illusion that when they are experiencing time pressure they are also more creative.** This explains why it is so difficult to get out of the pressure cooker, the rat race: the perception of creativity leads to the perpetuation of the stress.

Amabile's study revealed the phenomenon of "pressure hangover"—in which **high levels of pressure decreased creativity not only for the period in which the person felt pressured, but for up to days later.**

When we try to do too much, we compromise our potential for growth, both in terms of the ultimate currency as well as in terms of our quantifiable success. As J. P. Morgan, one of the most successful and creative entrepreneurs of all time, said, "I can do a year's work in nine months, but not in twelve." Sometimes, indeed, less is more.

Exercise

Can I reduce the number of meetings at work or the duration of some of the meetings? Am I saying "yes" to activities to which I can say "no"? Commit to reducing the busyness in your life. In addition, ritualize times when you can dedicate yourself fully, with undivided attention, to things you find both meaningful and pleasurable: spending time with your family, gardening, focusing on a project at work, meditating, watching a film, and so on.