SUMMARY OF PARASHAT EMOR

THE PRIESTS

In this Parasha, HaShem transmits to Moshe the laws that apply to his brother Aharon, his sons, and all his male descendants, the Cohanim, the priests of the Jewish People. They must keep themselves pure and holy and, in opposition to the pagan priests, who were primarily responsible for the cult of the dead, the Cohanim must not have contact with a dead body. The Cohanim also have additional restrictions regarding the woman they can marry. There are also rules regarding the daughters of the Cohanim and the standards of morality that they must observe.

THE HEAD PRIEST

The Head Priest, or Cohen Gadol, must comply with additional rules. He must not let his hair grow too long, he cannot observe regular mourning by tearing his clothes or having contact with a corpse. He must not leave the Sanctuary, he must only marry an unmarried woman. And if he contracts any impurity, he cannot perform the service of the Temple. Likewise, the priest with some physical blemish should remain outside the Divine Service in the Temple. The Temple Service must be immaculate. Priestly offerings could not be made in a state of impurity. And animal sacrifices cannot be made with sick or blemished animals. The Divine Name cannot be profaned but consecrated and sanctified.

HOLIDAY NUMBER ONE

The Tora mentions the Jewish Holidays. First, the Shabbat, the Seventh-day, is the most important holiday in the Hebrew calendar. For six days, you will work, and on Shabbat, you shall declare your work finished and dedicate the day to HaShem, your God.

PESACH

In the first month of the year (Nisan), on the fourteenth day of the month, the festival of Pesach shall be celebrated, offering that day the Pesach sacrifice. The fifteenth day of Pesach is the Festival of Matzot, for seven days you will eat only unleavened bread. The first day you will declare it sacred and you will not do any work or work. The seventh day of Pesach shall also be sanctified as a Holy day.

OMER AND SHABUOT

When you enter the promised land that I give you and you harvest your grain, you shall bring an ‘omer, a portion of barley from your first harvest. The priest shall offer it to God. After seven full weeks, counting from the time of this offering, the fiftieth day (Shabuot), you shall bring a new offering to God: leavened bread, unleavened bread, and animal offerings without blemish, as an expression of obedience to God. When you harvest your field, you will leave the ears belonging to the poor and the foreigner (for example, the corners of the fields, etc.).

ROSH HASHANA, YOM KIPPUR, AND SUCCOT

In the seventh month of the year (Tishri) on the first day of the month, the Shofar will be heard (on Rosh HaShana). And on the tenth day of the month, you will celebrate a Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). You will deprive yourself of eating and doing any worldly work or activity on that day. If a person does not deprive himself of these necessities on that day, he will be cut off (karet) from his community. This Day of Atonement will be established for posterity and in all your dwellings.

The Festival of the Huts will be celebrated on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. For seven days you will be dedicated to God. No work is to be performed on the first day and the eighth day. You should take the fruit of a beautiful tree

(citrus, or in Hebrew etrog), leaves of palm branches (lulab), myrtle branches (hadas), and willows (araba), and rejoice before God. You will live in these huts for seven days, so that future generations will know and remember that I, HaShem, made had them living in huts when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.

LAST LAWS

Returning to the Temple service, Aharon will set up a lamp that will burn constantly, day and night, in the Sanctuary. If someone does not respect the Name of God and offends it, he will be removed from the community and executed. If a man murders another man, he will be put to death. Whoever attempts against the life of an animal must pay compensation for that animal. If someone causes any damage to another person, he must pay compensation: for fractures or accidental mutilations. This compensation will be required in favor of the victim, maintaining the same rule for both the citizen and the foreigner (“ger”: legal resident or nationalized). I am HaShem, your Go

Finally, HaShem instructs Moshe to learn the laws that apply to his brother Aharon, his sons, and all his male descendants, the Cohanim, who are the priests of the Jewish People. They must keep themselves pure and holy, and in opposition to the pagan priests who were primarily responsible for the cult of the dead, the Cohanim must not have contact with a dead body. The Cohanim also have additional restrictions regarding the women they can marry. There are also rules regarding the daughters of the Cohanim and the standards of morality they must observe.