



THANK YOU HASHEM For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Bamidbar

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לזכות רפואה שלמה מלכה בת רחמי, מיכאל בן שולמית, יעקב משה בן דבורה שירה ואברתם יחודה בן שרה רבקה

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

שאו את ראש כל-עדת בני-ישראל למשפחותם לבית אבותם במספר
שמות כל-זכר לגלגלתם:

*"Take a census of the entire Jewish nation by the clans of its ancestral houses,
listing the names, every male, head by head."*

PARSHAS BAMIDBAR BEGINS with Hashem commanding Moshe to take a census of the Jewish nation in the desert. While loosely translated as "Take a census of etc.", the words used to introduce this command, "Se'u es rosh kol adas b'ni Yisrael l'mishpechosam...", literally mean "Raise the heads of the entire Jewish nation by its clans..." What is the relationship between the counting of the Jewish nation for a census and the concept of elevation or prominence implied by the word "se'u"? The Mei HaShiloach explains that while the nations of the world mesh together in an identity-obliterating mass of humanity, the Jewish nation is made up of individuals – each with his or her own unique mission to increase the honor of Hashem in a specific way. The tzaddik illustrates this idea with a brilliant analogy. In centuries past, artisans would honor the king by producing massive mosaics portraying the likeness of the ruler. Because they combined to form a very specific image, each of these tiny squares was of utmost importance. Were even a single piece to be missing or out of place, the entire portrait would be ruined. In the same way, each and every Jewish soul represents a unique cube in an expansive mosaic that portrays the "likeness" of the King of kings. Charged with the most significant of all missions, each individual is of utmost

A GOOD DEED
IS BEST REMEMBERED
IN HEAVEN WHEN
IT IS FORGOTTEN
BY THE MAN WHO
PERFORMED IT.

- Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin

importance – if even one were to be missing, the image would stand incomplete. In light of this concept, the Ishbitzer explains that the word used in reference to the census, "se'u", also connotes greatness and elevation because the counting of these individuals hinted at their uniquely elevated stature and the eternal mission which requires each soul to fulfill its part in this glorious enterprise. 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- Hashem commands Moshe to conduct a census of the twelve *shevatim*. Moshe counts 603,550 men ages 20 to 60. Shevet Levi is counted separately. The Levi'im, who are to serve in the Mishkan, replace the firstborn who were disqualified when they participated in the worshipping of the Golden Calf. The 273 firstborn who lacked Leviim to replace them had to pay a five-shekel "ransom" to redeem themselves.
- Upon preparing to travel, the Leviim dismantled and transported the Mishkan and reassembled it at the center of the next stop. The kohanim carried the vessels of the Mishkan and camped to its south; the Gershuni, in charge of its tapestries and roof coverings, to its west; and the families of Merari, who transported its wall panels and pillars, to its north. The tents of Moshe, Ahron, and Ahron's sons were to the east of the entrance of the Mishkan.
- The twelve *shevatim* camped in four groups of three shevatim each. East: Yehudah, Yissachar, and Zevulun. South: Reuven, Shimon, and Gad. West: Ephraim, Manasheh, and Binyamin. North: Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. This formation was kept while traveling as well. Each tribe had its own *nassi*, and a special flag with its color and emblem.

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ואלה תולדות אהרן ומשה ביום דבר ה' את־משה בהר סיני:

"And these are the offspring of Ahron and Moshe at the time that Hashem spoke to them on Har Sinai."

IN THIS WEEK'S parsha, the verse states, "These are the offspring of Ahron and Moshe". However, the verses only go on to list Ahron's children, not the children of Moshe. The question begs: If Moshe's children were not to be subsequently mentioned, why was his name mentioned in the verse? From here, Chazal derive the following rule: One who teaches Torah to another person's child, "*Ma'aleh alav hakasuv k'ilu y'lado*", it is considered as if he fathered him. Since Moshe Rabbeinu taught Torah to Ahron's children, they are considered to be his offspring as well.

The holy Tiferes Shlomo of Radomsk zy" a says the most amazing thing. While on a simple level, Chazal are communicating the idea that when a person teaches Torah to another person's son, it is considered as if he fathered that child, the ambiguity of the language our sages chose to use, "*k'ilu yaldo*", hints to a deeper, more radical idea: When one teaches Torah to another person's child, "*k'ilu y'lado*", it is as if the child fathered him! Because of the incredible gravity of teaching Torah, it is plausible that this person came to the world to fill this role as a holy educator. Therefore, this child is to his teacher what a father is to a son; he represents the premise of the rebbe's existence, the source of his life-force in this world.

This idea is exceedingly profound. The Radomsker tzaddik is teaching us that it is possible for a Jew to discover and engage in activities which touch the core of his existence and represent the very premise of his brief foray through the wilderness of this world. Every member of our holy nation has a sacred mission to fulfill, entirely unique and particularly suited to his upbringing, personality, challenges, and life circumstance. And when we finally locate our mission by way of tefillah and deep introspection we feel as Moshe Rabbeinu did when, in teaching Torah, he revealed the core of his soul. It becomes clear to us that this activity has fathered us, that we have been sent from the supernal realms to this cold, dark world for the sole purpose of shining Hashem's light in this unique way - a way in which nobody else could. This teaching demands of us that we assess our lives: Have we yet located our mission? Is there any activity we perceive to be granting us life in this wondrous way? May Hashem grant us the siyata d'Shmaya to get in touch with our essential selves and live lives of passion, meaning, joy, vibrancy, and an abiding sense of fulfillment! 🙏



When we discover our unique mission in the world, it becomes clear that this mission is our "father"; the premise of our existence and the source of our vitality.

Zechus Avos

Yahrtzeit of the Week

6 Sivan- Shavuos (Thursday night, Friday – May 20th)

Rabbeinu Yisrael Baal Shem Tov (1729–1779)

THE Yahrzeit OF the holy Baal Shem Tov, Rav Yisrael ben Eliezer zy" a, is Shavuos - the same day as the *yahrzeit* of David Hamelech from whom he descended. A handwritten inscription in the siddur of Reb Avrohom Shimshon of Rashkov (son of Reb Yaakov Yosef of Pollonye), records that the Baal Shem Tov passed away on Wednesday, the first day of *Shavuos* 5520/1760. The words **בעל שם טוב** are numerically equivalent to **יום החמישים**, a reference to *Shavuos* which comes after the 49-day counting of the Omer. The Baal Shem Tov revealed a new path of avodas Hashem for the era preceding the arrival of Moshiach. He stressed the imminence of Hashem's presence, the idea that everything could be used to serve Hashem, and that each individual has a special mission in this world.

The Degel Machaneh Ephraim discusses a verse in Beshalach which refers to the exodus from Egypt, ובני ישראל יצאים ביד רמה. Targum Onkelos translates as ביד רמה **גלי**, **בריש גלי**, "the pinnacle of joy." The word **בריש** contains the opening letters of **בן שמעון**, alluding to the merit of the Sefer HaZohar with which we will ultimately be redeemed from exile. The word **בריש** is also the opening letters of **רבי ישראל בעל שם**, alluding to a letter written by the Baal Shem Tov in which he recounts - in the name of Moshiach himself - that the final redemption will arrive when the teachings and consciousness of Chassidus spread throughout the world. The Baal Shem Tov's granddaughter is also referenced here, as the words **בריש גלי** are equal to **פיגא בת יחיאל**. In addition, **ריש גלי** is equal to the name of her son, **נחמן בן שמחה**, who further refined the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov for the final generations.

The Baal Shem Tov teaches that even when Hashem is concealed, a Jew should realize that He is always present. Indeed, the verse in *Az Yashir* which expresses the murderous pursuit of the Egyptian army is comprised of five consecutive words which begin with the letter א, a reference to Hashem (**אחלק שלל**). This teaches us that even in the suffering, Hashem is holding our hand. Remarkably, 5 times the word **אלף** is numerically equivalent to **בריש גלי**. *Zechuso yagein aleinu v'al kol Yisrael!* 🙏

This section is adapted from the yahrtzeit remazim of R' David Friedman.

The Baal Shem Tov's ohel in Medzhibozh



Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

DURING KIDDUSH, WE thank Hashem for sanctifying us with His mitzvos and for this that “*v’ratzah banu*”, that He desires us. The Chernovitzer Rav reveals the deeper spiritual meaning alluded to in these words. When each of its letters are spelled out as words, the divine name *Elokim* can be expanded in three ways. The letter *hei* can be spelled with *yud* (הי), with an *aleph* (הא), and with another *hei* (הה). The tzaddik explains that while, in the forms of *Elokim* in which the *hei* is spelled with a *yud* or an *aleph*, the judgement implied by this name is sweetened by these letters themselves, the form of *Elokim* in which the *hei* is spelled with another *hei* represents total judgement. Therefore, the sweetening of this form of *Gevurah* is not within the word itself, but rather in its numerical value, as the value of this expansion (295) is shared by the word “*retzeih*” (רצה) which implies good-will and desire. When klal Yisrael are refined and acting in accordance with the Torah’s ideals, a spirit of “*retzeih*” - good-will which is rooted in the *Sefirah* of *Netzach*, sweetens the final expression of *Gevurah*. In this shining moment, the “*Tzarah*” (צרה) of disconnect from Hashem is transformed into “*Tzohar*” (צהר), the brilliant illumination of His closeness and love. The tzaddik teaches that in addition to the sweetening of *Hod* we discussed in previous weeks, this rectification takes place during kiddush as well. Friday night, when all of the external distraction fades from our lives and we are enveloped by a spirit of faith and the holiness of our essentiality, Hashem’s desire is awakened, sweetening even the harshest judgments. It is this rectification we are alluding to in the words “*v’ratzah banu*” in kiddush, “*r’tzei v’hachlitzeinu*” in *bentching*, and “*r’tzei b’menuchaseinu*” in davening. When we say these words with this awesome *kavvanah* in mind, this can increase the potency of the rectification occurring at that very moment in the spiritual realms. ✨

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

P’nimiyus Ha’Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

OF ALL THE minhagim associated with the chag of Shavuos, remaining awake all night to study Torah is perhaps the most significant. (Yes, eating enormous amounts of cheesecake is undoubtedly a close second.) This minhag traces all the way back to the Zohar HaKadosh, resurfaces in the writing of the Shelah HaKadosh, is mentioned by the Arizal, and is codified in the Magen Avraham – parenthetically the first source to explain the reason for this minhag as being a rectification for klal Yisrael’s sleeping in on the morning of Maran Torah, as the Midrash recounts. The question is, with so much Torah to learn, what should one focus on in the hours of Shavuos night? Because, according to the mekubalim, the primary rectification accomplished on Shavuos night is the staying up itself and not necessarily reliant on the area of Torah that is studied, we find divergent guidelines from various tzaddikim throughout the generations. The minhag by many of the chassidim and Sephardim is to recite “*Tikkun Leil Shavuos*”, a text which includes the beginning and end of every section of the Tanach and Mishnayos, certain selections of key Kabbalistic texts, and a list of the 613 mitzvos of the Torah. The tzaddikim taught that by studying the beginning and end of the basic sections of the Torah, it is as if one has learned the entire thing.

Although there are more esoteric intentions contained in the *Tikkun Leil Shavuos* which are known as the *Chaf-Dalet Kishutei Kallah*, Reb Nosson of Breslov provides an insight into this minhag that aligns with the kabbalistic intention. (*Likutei Halachos, Masa Umatan* 4:10-11). The relationship between klal Yisrael and the Master of the world is one that spans the entire structure of existence, ranging from “*Reishis*”, the conception of creation within the Infinite Creator Himself, all the way to “*acharis*”, the individual Jewish soul bound to a physical body in the lowliest realms of corporeality. When a Jew maintains a passionate relationship with Hashem through the framework of the Torah and its commandments, his inner eyes are ever turned heavenward,

meeting the gaze of Hashem by Whom he feels constantly overwhelmed. In the life of the tzaddik, the aspects of “*acharis*” and “*Reishis*” are bound together as one. However, when a Jew does not live a life of aligned with the Divine, focusing his gaze on the distractions of daily living instead of the all-consuming quest to grow closer to the Master of the world, the shared gaze of the soul and its divine Source is broken, and the link between “*acharis*” and “*Reishis*” is shattered, causing the lower realms to drop into the void of meaninglessness. Instead of being illuminated with the light of an elevated purpose, this person’s experience of physicality as pure “*acharis*” devoid of a relationship with the spiritual Source of “*Reishis*” is dark, base, hopeless, and enveloped by a sense of existential anxiety.

Chazal tell us that Matan Torah was a wedding celebration between the lovers of *Shir HaShirim*, the collective Jewish soul and Hashem. Each Shavuos, we are given a chance to re-experience this intimacy and refocus our gaze on the Source from which we derive and with whom we toil to achieve the deepest sense of closeness and unity. Fascinatingly, the Torah begins with the word “*Bereishis*”, which is associated in the Zohar HaKadosh with sight (its letters spell “*roshei – bas*”, and “*bas ayin*” is the pupil of the eye) and ends with the words “*I’einei kol Yisrael*”, the eyes of the Jewish nation. The giving of the Torah each Shavuos awakens the gaze of am Yisrael, the level of “*acharis*” (represented by the *last* words in the Torah) toward the gaze of Hashem, the level of “*Reishis*” (represented by the first word in the Torah *Bereishis* – “*roshei-bas*”), beautifying the Jewish nation in the eyes of Hashem and returning the passion of our relationship to the level of intensity experienced by matan Torah, “wedding night.” Reb Nosson explains that this is why *Tikkun Leil Shavuos* involves studying the *beginning* and *end* of each section in the Torah – another reference to the bond between “*Reishis*” and “*acharis*” that is rejuvenated on this glorious night. ✨

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

One Shavuos, the Sar Shalom of Belz asked his chassidim to sing a particular stanza from one of the Shabbos *zemiros*, “Yom Shabbason”. With great joy and fervor, the chassidim sang the words, “And they all entered into covenant together, said “*Naaseh v’nishma*” in unison, and announced and said “Hashem is one.”

After a few moments of singing, the tzaddik held up his hand and motioned for silence. The tzaddik spoke: “At Har Sinai, when the Jewish nation heard the positive commandments, they responded with a resounding “YES!” When they heard the negative commandments, they shouted “NO!” . But when the souls assembled at the foot of Har Sinai heard, “I am Hashem your God” and, “You shall not have any other god in My place” spoken at the very same time, they didn’t know whether to answer “yes” or “no”, for this was both a positive and negative commandment included as one! Therefore, “*Upaschu v’anu Hashem echad*”, they responded by announcing, “Hashem is one!””

The tzaddik fell silent and the chassidim continued their singing. This time, when they came to the words “*Upaschu v’anu*”, a look of intense rapture and awe fell over the face of the Sar Shalom and he roared in an awesome voice that shook the very walls, “**HASHEM ECHAD!**”

Each Shavuos, we experience matan Torah and receive the Torah anew. If we listen closely, perhaps we will hear the Aseres HaDibros echoing across the generations! 🙏

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“THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY”
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