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 NETIVARYEH



Parshat Bamidbar 5769

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The response to learn as a zchut for a refuah shleima for Rabbanit Korn (**Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia**) was overwhelming.

As an additional zchut HaRav Bina is asking everyone to commit themselves to not talk in Shul from now until Shavuot - [sign up](#) and join the 233 people who already have!

**Snapshot****Shabbat:**

- Shana Bet had a Shabbaton in Mattityahu with Rav Bina, Rav Varon, Rav Dani Bader, Rav Yoel Yehoshuah, Rav Ginsburg, Rav Eisenstein, and Rav Miller.

**Monday:**

- Rav Shiloni gave a chug for Alumni in NY.

**Tuesday:**

- Rav Steven Burg, International Director of NCSY, spoke to the students.

**Wednesday:**

- In honor of Yom Yerushalayim, Rabbi Sholom Gold, former Rav of Young Israel of West Hempstead and of Kehillat Zichron Yosef in Har Nof, addressed the students on the meaning of Yom Ha'Atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim.

(E-mail)



[Click here for the Video](#)

### Thursday:

- Dayan Yonason Abraham of the London Beit Din spoke to the students.

### Yom Yerushalayim Schedule Afternoon/Evening:

- Dancing with Israeli Flags on the Kotel Plaza (with tens of thousands)
- *Tefilla Chagigit* and *Seuda Chagigit*
- Dancing at Mercaz HaRav and marching back to the Old City

### Poland Journal, Last Day

Over the last few weeks we have shared with you excerpts from the many personal journals kept by our students who toured Poland. This is the last installment of the series. The following was written by Chaim Strassman, Shana Alef - TABC.



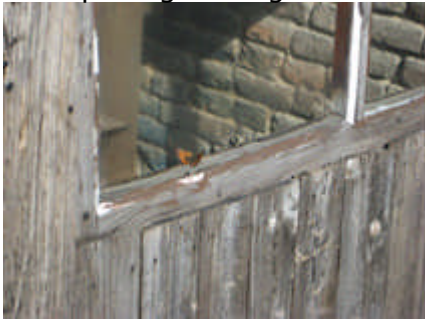
Our last day in Poland - I can't wait to finally return to *Eretz Yisrael*. I have no desire to go to Prague but I am sure it will be meaningful and perhaps enjoyable.

We davened *Shacharit* in the Gerer shul which served as home to the many Gerer Chassidim who would regularly come to learn and visit their beloved Rebbi. They have relocated to *Eretz Yisrael* and this site in Poland is now empty! We finished davening and then had a *Tisch*! Imagine a *tisch* on an ordinary Tuesday morning. This, however, was no ordinary Tuesday morning. The *tisch* was incredible, one of the spiritual high points of our trip. Singing together with guys who have visited places which were witness to the most horrific events in the history of mankind, we were united in crying out to Hashem - it was truly amazing.

Following the *tisch*, we shared our feelings about our experience. I mentioned the incredible *hakarot hatov* we owe our parents for having sent us to Israel and Poland. We must appreciate that we have a Jewish homeland. We also must appreciate the fact that our families are intact and not torn apart as was the case

with Jewish families in Poland.

Our last stop in Poland was the Majdanek death camp. It was still intact for the most part. I could feel the horror while standing in the gas chamber, I could see the claw marks on the walls of fingernails trying to hold on for dear life. We saw the opening through which the gas pellets were dropped - it was just sickening.



The most chilling thought came to mind as I left the gas chamber. I saw a butterfly sitting on the window. This beautiful creature sat having no idea of the horrors that took place in this very chamber sixty years ago. It struck me that as I looked out from the gas chamber, I could see directly into town. Rav Krieger had pointed this out to us before, but it finally hit home. If people can live next door to a death factory, if a butterfly can sit unknowingly on this machinery of murder, what will be in the

future? The world is already full of Holocaust deniers. We must continue to have trips like these to maintain some remembrance so that what took place here does not simply fade into history. The world must not and cannot get used to such an idea. We are now the witnesses.

### **Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Bamidbar**

**HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon**

## **ACHIEVING CLOSENESS TO HASHEM**



### **GUARDS OR GUARDIANS.**

This week's *parsha* describes the Kohen and Levi's roles as guardians of the *Beit Hamikdash* (*Parshat Korach* repeats and elaborates on this). The Rambam explains that these guards did not need to protect the Mikdash, they were guards of honor, whose presence added glory to the Mikdash. The Mikdash itself, which houses the Divine Presence, protects us - we do not need to guard it. There is an opinion that the guards were stationed there to safeguard the fortunes of gold and silver donated by the populace, however the Rambam does not discuss this.

What is puzzling about the Rambam's view is that the Torah seems to explicitly state their function. The guards are stationed outside the Mikdash to insure entry only to those permitted by the Torah. Any non-Kohen, or even a Kohen who is ritually impure, cannot enter beyond a certain point. Our *parsha* alludes to this task of the guards, while *Parshat Korach* spells it out more clearly. After the incident in which the ground swallowed up Korach and his assembly, we read: "The Children of Israel said to Moshe, saying: 'Behold! we perish, we are lost we are all lost'" (*Bamidbar* 17:27). Observing what happened to Korach and his cohorts, they noted that "everyone who approaches closer to the Tabernacle of Hashem will die." Terrified for themselves, they asked: "Will we ever stop perishing?" (*ibid.* 28).

### **YEARNING FOR A SPARK OF HOLINESS**

Hashem then said to Aharon: "You, your sons, and your father's household with you shall bear the iniquity of the Sanctuary; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. Also your brethren the tribe of Levi, the tribe

of your father, shall you draw near with you, and they shall be joined to you and minister to you. You and your sons with you shall be before the Tent of the Testimony. They shall safeguard your charge and the charge of the entire tent" (*Bamidbar* 18:1-3). The Torah appears to be describing this function of the guards, insuring that only Aharon and his descendants enter the Mikdash.

It is a severe prohibition to enter the Mikdash without permission. A non-kohen violates a *lav* in the Torah, while one who enters in a state of ritual impurity is punished with *karet*. Given the severity of this prohibition, why the need for safeguarding the area? Is the Torah speaking to children? Presumably any adult has the common sense to keep away from a dangerous area. Would one even approach an area known to be a minefield? We already read how the people feared they would die if they got too close - is someone forcing them to approach the forbidden zone that they require guards.

Rashi explains that the people feared that they would be unable to refrain from crossing forbidden boundaries. Jewish people yearn for that spark of holiness found in the Mikdash. In their quest to get as close to Hashem as possible, they fear they may lose control and enter a forbidden area. A place imbued with *kedusha*, sanctity, is a place where one can receive G-dliness. This G-dliness is attainable, however there are limitations. Certain parts of it are off-limits even to a Kohen Gadol, others to an ordinary Kohen and still larger areas are forbidden to a Yisrael. The Jewish people, in their striving to reach the top, may cross into forbidden areas, thus they need the tribe of Levi to protect them from this. Although a person should strive to reach as high a spiritual level as possible, he must also realize his limitations.

Immediately prior to Matan Torah, Hashem told Moshe Rabenu to instruct the Jewish nation to become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (*Shmot* 19:6). The people responded: "everything that Hashem has spoken we shall do" (*ibid.* 8). The Torah records "*vayashev Moshe*" - Moshe relayed the words of the people to Hashem. Shortly thereafter Hashem spoke to Moshe at Har Sinai: "Behold! I come to you in the thickness of the cloud, so that the people will hear as I speak to you, and they will also believe in you forever" (*ibid.* 9). When the people hear Hashem speaking to Moshe they will wish to receive the Torah. Moshe relayed this message to the people, and then "*vayaged Moshe*" - "Moshe related the words of the people to Hashem" (*ibid.*).

The verb *vayaged* as opposed to *vayashev* implies that Moshe did not simply relay the people's response, for there was a point of contention here. The commentaries explain that this time, when Hashem declared that He will speak only to Moshe the people expressed dissatisfaction and did not simply respond: "Everything that Hashem has spoken we shall do!" (*ibid.* 8). "*Vayashev Moshe*" would have implied that the answer was a simple "yes". However this did not adequately describe what Moshe reported back to Hashem. Rashi describes the people's unhappiness with the prospect of Hashem speaking only to Moshe- "it is our wish to see our King" - they desired to hear Hashem's voice directly from within the fire - they wished to attain that same level of prophecy.

Hashem acquiesced to this request and instructed Moshe "Go to the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and they shall wash their clothing. Let them be prepared for the third day, for on the third day Hashem shall descend in the sight of the entire people on Har Sinai" (*ibid.* 10-11). The nation needs to make the necessary preparations for this great event.

It seems that the nation subsequently regretted their insistence that Hashem speak directly to them. They told Moshe: "You speak to us and we shall hear; let G-d not speak to us lest we die" (Shmot 20:16). Those present at Har Sinai felt unable to cope with this high level, a level that even Yechezkel and other prophets did not attain: "For is there any human that has heard the voice of the Living G-d speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? You should approach and hear whatever Hashem, our G-d, will say, and you should speak to us whatever Hashem, our G-d will speak to you - then we shall hear and we shall do" (*Devarim* 5:23-24).

In the middle of the second commandment the people appear to express regret. Hashem spoke the commandments of "*anochi*" and "*lo yihye*" directly to the people, yet before completing the second commandment, the nation cried to Moshe: "You should approach and hear"- they were no longer able to tolerate hearing the voice of Hashem at Sinai.

I do not think they had any reason to regret their desire that Hashem speak to them directly. While it may be true that the nation felt unable to withstand this high level, nevertheless it was worth reaching that level of prophecy even if for only the short amount of time it took to say "*anochi*" and "*lo yihye*". It was worth being present at this momentous occasion in which a recently enslaved nation who was forced to work with mortar and bricks received the tremendous gift of the Torah. This was the same nation who only fifty days previously had found themselves sunken to the depths of the forty-nine levels of impurity. Had it not been for Hashem's last minute intervention, their dough would have leavened. The dough in this case refers to the *yetzer hara*. The *yetzer hara* would have overpowered them rendering them incapable of ascending from the impurity of Egypt. As they neared the Yam Suf, it is of this nation that the angel of Egypt charged that they appeared no different from the Egyptians and that therefore they did not deserve to be saved.

At our Pesach Seder we declare: "if You had only brought us to Har Sinai and had not given us the Torah, this would have been sufficient". What is the use of being at Har Sinai without receiving the Torah? Feeling that closeness to Hashem and having reached such a high level would have been worthwhile even had we not received the Torah. It was here that the Jewish nation reached the understanding that *ki Hashem hu haelokim bashamayim mimaal ve-al haaretz mitachat ein od* - no other power exists in the heaven nor on the earth. At Har Sinai we actually felt the Divine Presence.

The Jewish soul yearns for that closeness. I believe it was the Radba"z who wrote that even following the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash many people desired to go on *Har HaBayit* - they had difficulty staying away. The Jewish wants to feel that holiness.

### **THE JEWISH SOUL YEARNs TO ENTER THE MIKDASH**

A non-Jew cannot understand this. Yaakov wished to purchase the birthright from Esav: "Yaakov said: 'sell, as this day, your birthright to me'" (*Bereishit* 25:31). What does it mean to sell the birthright? Although Yaakov and Esav were twins, Esav was firstborn. How could a sale change these facts? Rashi comments that Yaakov wanted to attain the *kehuna*. Prior to Matan Torah, the *kehuna* belonged to the firstborn, but it appears they had the right to transfer it to others. Yaakov desired to serve Hashem and wished to bring Him offerings. Esav responded: "Look

I am going to die, so of what use to me is a birthright?" (*Bereishit* 25:32). From where did Esav get the idea that he was going to die? Rashi elaborates on this conversation: "Esav said 'what is the nature of this service?' Yaakov said to him: 'several prohibitions, and punishments, and death penalties are associated with it, such as that which we have learned: 'the following are included in the death penalty: those who have performed the service after having drunk wine, and those who perform the service having long hair'; Esav said: 'I am going to die through the birthright, if so, what is there in it that I would want?'" (Rashi *Bereishit* 25:32).

Esav reasoned: if I am going to die from the *avoda* then why would I want to be the Kohen, if you (Yaakov) want it so badly then you take it. Yaakov was well aware of the potential dangers but he was willing to take the risk, for he so badly wanted to serve Hashem. Esav did not wish to take the risk, being a Kohen to Hashem did not have meaning for him. For a Jew it is almost impossible not to wish to serve Hashem. The Jewish soul yearns to enter the Mikdash and serve Him.

### **FINDING WAYS TO COME CLOSER TO HASHEM**

Chazal teach us that at Har Sinai the Jewish people felt so close to Hashem, so full of *yirat Shamayim*, that whoever sinned felt a great sense of shame. Whoever did not learn Torah or acted improperly in some other manner was greatly embarrassed. In addition to the Torah itself, it was this feeling of closeness to Hashem that constituted the great gift we received at Har Sinai.

At a later stage we received the gift of *Eretz Yisrael* - the Land of holiness. Many great countries exist, but we received the King's palace. Hashem went still further and gave us Yerushalayim and the Beit HaMikdash. We feel eternal gratitude to Hashem for these gifts. Baruch Hashem we learn in a Yeshiva which sits adjacent to the site of the Beit HaMikdash. As close as we feel, we must realize that it cannot compare to what we will feel, with Hashem's help, when the Beit HaMikdash is rebuilt when we will be able to offer the *korbanot* of Shavuot and other days. We yearn to view the Kohen Gadol's *Avoda* on Yom Kippur. As we mentioned, there are limitations regarding how close we can come, but we must yearn to be near Hashem.

We can find other ways of coming close to Hashem besides for entering the Beit HaMikdash. We have mentioned on several occasions that learning Torah brings us close to Hashem's thoughts, that *tefillah* creates an emotional bond between ourselves and Hashem, and that by performing acts of *chesed* we emulate Hashem Who only gives. When a person gives to another, he comes closer to Hashem, while when he takes he distances himself from Him. We hope and pray that Hashem will see our desire to come closer to Him and speedily in our day He will restore the Beit HaMikdash where we will be able to offer him our *korbanot*. Amen.

#### **Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Zvi Ron**

In this week's Parsha we read about two ways to count Bnei Yisrael. One way is to count every person by his name (1:2 "*bemispar shemot*"), the other is to count each person as a member of his *shevet*, symbolized by the flag (2:2 "*ish al diglo*"). Why do we need two ways to count the Jewish People? Once we count them by names, there does not seem to be any reason to count by flag groupings.



The Midrash teaches us that each tribe had a flag, and that each flag had a special color and symbol. For example, Yehuda had a sky blue flag with a lion on it, and Zevulun had a white flag with a boat on it. When were the tribes given these flags? The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 2:3) explains that at the giving of the Torah at Har Sinai, Bnei Yisrael saw 22 myriads of angels coming down. These angels were arranged in groups, like soldiers, and each group had a flag. Upon seeing this, the Jewish People asked for flags of their own and Hashem granted this request.

What is so special about a flag? Why did Bnei Yisrael want flags? The idea behind the angels' flags is that angels have a specific mission, a role to fulfill in the Divine Plan. The flag represents their being part of a team with a goal and a destiny. That is why angels are referred to as being part of an army (*tzava*). Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch explains that the term *tzava* is used in a non-military context as well - e.g. the Leviim. The term means "a group with a mission" - a troop ready to execute their orders. It is this aspect of being part of a group that the Jewish People wished to emulate. The angels knew what their task was and were dedicated to fulfilling it; Bnei Yisrael also wanted to feel that they were a people with a mission. That is the concept of a flag.

When we read of counting people "according to their flags" we are saying that an important part of being a Jew is feeling part of a group with clear goals and a feeling of a shared destiny. In bygone times, every troop marching off to war had a standard bearer whose job was to hold the flag up high. That way during the chaos of battle a soldier would always know where his group was and where he could return to. In our chaotic lives, being part of a group provides a haven and sense of direction.

But there is also another way of counting Bnei Yisrael, according to names. A name represents a person's individuality, his unique nature. For this reason the Torah indicates that there are two ways to count, two aspects to a person, the communal aspect and the individual aspect. We need both to be able to fulfill our destiny.

**Student Dvar Torah**  
**by Tzvi Kantor, Shana Alef - DRS, West Hempstead**

**You Get What You Pay For**

The Medrash Rabba in the beginning of this week's *parsha* explains how the Leviim became the leaders of *Klal Yisrael*. Following the *chet haegel*, Moshe asked, "If you are on G-d's team, come with me!" The tribe of Levi stepped up, and they were therefore given the honor of serving in the Mishkan, replacing the firstborns. The Sfas Emes explains that this highlights the story of Man's relationship to Hashem. The more effort you put in running out to Hashem, the more He comes running out to you. Hashem wants a relationship, but He can't force it on us, we need to sign up for His team.



The Perush HaRosh points out that we see from various *psukim* that the Torah is associated with fire, water, and desert. The Rosh explains that the common denominator between these three things is that they are *hefker* - free and open for the taking. By the same token, Torah is available to all who desire it (free for the taking).

Rav Kook has the following *Mashal* about *Eretz Yisrael* whose application is not limited to *Eretz Yisrael*, but apply to anything spiritual. There was a Princess who was desperate to get married. She created a waiting room and invited all potential suitors to come and visit her. She placed a bunch of magazines, food and video games in the waiting room, and waited behind a peep-hole to watch how the potential husbands acted. One man came in and started eating all the food ripping through the magazines and became an all out couch potato. The princess observed this and reacted by putting on her worst clothing, drawing a large mole on her face and making her over-all appearance as ugly as she could. When she came out to greet the man, he took one look at her and fled as quickly as his feet could run.

The next potential husband arrived and waited patiently, did not touch the snacks, and made sure that his appearance was neat and well-groomed as is fitting a person about to meet a princess. The princess saw this and put on her best clothes, makeup, and made sure to look her sparkling best.

By the same token, Hashem reveals the world to us as we choose to reveal ourselves to it! It is up to us to take the steps we need to make our relationship with Hashem as beautiful as possible.

The Rambam in *Hilchos Talmud Torah* explains that during the times of the Temple the *Kohanim* were the teachers of Torah in *Klal Yisrael*. Today, any person who feels a calling towards a Torah lifestyle is obligated to pursue it.

Regarding the placement of the *Aron HaKodesh*; the sacred ark, in the middle of the camp, the Chafetz Chaim explains that the *Aron* is compared to the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. (Both are called *Eitz Chaim*). No matter where the Torah and The Aron are placed, that is the center. It our job as Hashem's nation to center ourselves around it. If we think that the Ark is not in place, we must realize that it is really the Jewish people who are out of place.

HaRav Ben Zion Leybovitchasked a pertinent question regarding the counting of *Bnei Yisrael* found in our *Parsha*. Between all the flag-making, family-designating, job-distributing in the *Parsha* it seems like the individual lost his spot-light for the sake of the general public - he is nothing more than a number. What happened? The answer can be found in Megilas Esther. Mordechai speaks to Esther before she goes to the king and tells her that salvation will come to the Jews whether or not she takes an active role in their being saved, but G-d is offering you a historic opportunity, why pass that up?

The answer to Rav Leybovitch's question is that it is up to us to determine our roles as individuals. We are all replaceable. But G-d has endowed us with the potential for greatness. All he wants is that we go out, search, and aspire for it. We must have the will to go beyond mediocrity, and the inborn ability to establish a close, warm, personal relationship to a *Halachic* lifestyle, *Mitzvos*, Torah and our Maker. The best part is? It's up for grabs!

But there is a catch. **WE HAVE TO WILL IT TO BE SO!** Hashem chose the *Leviim* because they chose him. One can devote himself to Torah - the only prerequisite is a desire. A relationship with Hashem is beautiful only if we beautify ourselves for Him.

A Jewish life only has the value of what you invest in it.

**You get what you pay for.**

**Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List  
Announcements from the Yeshiva**

**Mazal Tov:**

The Yeshiva would like to wish a Mazal Tov to:

- Daniel (5756-57, 63) and Shira Edelstein on the birth of a baby girl, Goldie. Mazel Tov to the grandparents, Chaim and Shlomit Edelstein.
- Dvir (5757-58) and Zahava Weinberg on the birth of a baby girl.
- Jordan Amrani (2004-2006) on his engagement to Rachel Farber.
- Milton Crane (5765-66) on his engagement to Sarah Mond.
- Michael (5752) and Bracha Berman on the birth of a baby boy.

**Visitors:**

The following people have visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Yehuda Gutstein (5764-65)
- Jason Goldschmidt (5767)
- Avi Jacob (5768)

**Baruch Dayan Emet:**

The Yeshiva regrets to inform you on the passing of:

- Nachum Tzvi ben Ratza, grandfather of Eric Weis (5766).

**Tehillim List**

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Nachum Tzvi ben Ratza
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Yehudis Sara bas Esther

- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Miriam Leba bat Esther
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah

**Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, let our office know so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - let us know! We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.**

**Shabbat Shalom,**

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh  
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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