

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON BAMIDBAR - 5759

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From: Don't Forget[SMTP:sefira@torah.org]
Subject: Day 44 / 6 weeks and 2 days
Tonight, the evening of Friday, May 14, will be day 44,
which is 6 weeks and 2 days of the omer.
... Yours, Your friends at Project Genesis

From: Rabbi Yissocher Frand[SMTP:ryfrand@torah.org]
"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas Bamidbar
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 194, Charging for Teaching Torah. Good Shabbos!
Traveling In Formation: A Lesson From Yaakov Avinu In this week's parsha we learn about the order and divisions in which the Jewish people traveled and camped in the desert. Moshe was commanded to divide the encampment into four divisions, each with its respective flag. Each division of three tribes traveled and camped along one of the sides of the Mishkan, with the Mishkan in the center. The Medrash explains that when HaShem [G-d] told Moshe that the Jews were to travel in a specific formation around the Mishkan, Moshe began to complain that if he specified such a formation, controversy would break out. "If I tell Yehudah to camp in the East, they will say they want the South, and so it will be with each and every tribe". HaShem told Moshe not to worry -- each tribe would know and accept their own place willingly because "they have travel plans predetermined from the days of the Patriarch Yaakov". The travel formation in the desert was identical to the arrangement that Yaakov Avinu [our forefather] made for his sons to use when they carried him out of Egypt to be buried in the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Chevron. The same three sons were in the front, the same three were on each side and the same three were behind. This Medrash is very difficult to understand. What was Moshe worried about in the first place? These were people of great moral and spiritual stature. They were not petty individuals who would be jockeying for position. In addition, what is the connection between their travels in the desert and their travels when they carried Yaakov's coffin? I found an interesting interpretation in the Ateres Mordechai. Moshe was worried about life in the wilderness. Life in the wilderness was not a natural existence. It was an existence that was tense and filled with danger. True, they had the Clouds of Glory and the Manna and the Well, but it was an unnatural existence -- they were living on a string. People

living under such immense physical pressures often lose their humanity and become like animals. [There are pictures of the American escape from Vietnam burned into our memories. When life becomes so tenuous, one's normal behavior ceases and one virtually ceases to be a human being.] Moshe Rabbeinu was worried about maintaining a sense of order and dignity in the desert. He was worried about the specter of the nation losing that sense - their sense of humanity. Moshe feared that their existence in the wilderness would lead to confusion, turmoil, and the very antithesis of neatness and civility. HaShem answered by telling Moshe that he need not worry about the Jewish people. They already learned this lesson of civility and dignity earlier in their history, when they suffered that great moment of trauma - the loss of Yaakov, the last of the Patriarchs. Before Yaakov's death, he instilled in his children, for all future generations, this strength of character - the ability to remain dignified and human even in times of adversity and trauma. The great proof of this, as we all know, are the incredible stories we hear about Jews in the concentration camps. When Jews were treated worse than animals, they were often able to rise above the occasion and maintain human dignity. Recently I heard a woman on a radio show reflecting on her life in the concentration camp, where she was treated in the most inhumane fashion imaginable. She and another girl struck up a friendship. They had lost their parents and families and they had no one else in the world besides each other. One day, while working in the field, one of these girls found a raspberry. She held the raspberry in her pocket for the entire day, and guarded it so that it would not get crushed. At the end of the day, she gave the raspberry to her friend. That was the last raspberry that she saw in her life - because she died there in the camp. The idea that a person can retain human dignity even when treated like an animal was the strength that Yaakov our Patriarch imbued in his children. Moshe feared the loss of such dignity, and HaShem's response was "They already have the travel plans from Yaakov, their father".

Traveling In Formation: As One Man With One Heart Another approach to this Medrash is as follows. Moshe's concern was not about the physical location of the Tribes during their travels in the desert. Moshe was worried about something else entirely. Many of the commentaries point out that the traveling locations of the Tribes around the Mishkan represented much more than the way in which they traveled. The groupings represented how they were to contribute to the nation as a whole. In order for a nation to be successful, there must be a division of labor. Not everyone can perform the same functions. There must be 'Priests' and 'Israelites', scholars and supporters of Torah, men and women. In order to create a successful nation, everyone must work toward a common good. Each person needs to do his part for a higher purpose. When Moshe divided the Tribes, it was not merely a geographical or chronological division, but a division of roles. Moshe told HaShem, "When I tell Yissacher that they will be the learners of Torah and Zevulun that they will be the supporters of Torah... When I tell Asher that they will be the men of commerce and the Levites that they will be in charge of the Temple Service... there will be arguments and controversy." Moshe envisioned that one would say, "No, I want to do the Temple Service" and another one would say, "No, I want to do the learning", etc. HaShem reassured Moshe that this would not happen. They already received their missions in life from Yaakov Avinu. Yaakov called them in before his death and told them "how to travel." The "blessings" that Yaakov gave to his sons in Parshas Vayechi do not all appear to be "blessings". Some were actually critiques: "You are too this, and you are too that." The commentaries explain that before Yaakov's death, he gave to his children the greatest blessing that any parent can give. Yaakov told them their strengths and weaknesses. He told them, based on their natures, what their roles in life and mission among the Jewish people would be. Based on the personalities and characteristics and strengths of each son, Yaakov defined exactly what they should be and what they should do. HaShem told Moshe not to worry about assigning roles to the Tribes. They will not resent it or rebel because their great-grandfather already assigned the roles to them. "No arguments will emerge from your re-assignment of these same roles." This, says the Chidushei HaRi"m, is why we read Pashas Bamidbar before the Holiday of Shavuot. In order to achieve

a Kabbalas HaTorah [reception of the Torah], we need "and Israel camped there (vaYichan) opposite the mountain" [Shmos 19:2]. Our Rabbis emphasize that the verb vaYichan (they camped) is in the singular to indicate that when the Jewish nation camped prior to receiving the Torah, they camped with unity "as one man, with one heart". How is unity achieved? How are jealousy, envy, and argument removed? We read the Parsha of Bamidbar - about the encampment of every man by his appropriate tribe and by his appropriate flag. We read how everyone must understand that every person plays a vital role in Klal Yisroel - regardless of whether he is the teacher, or the doctor, or the fund-raiser, or whomever. The only way we can be a nation is by understanding and appreciating our individual roles. Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky points out in his sefer that the whole "Order of the Flags" was not commanded until after the second year in the wilderness. What happened when they traveled during the entire first year? Rav Yaakov explains that during the first year there was no Mishkan, no Tabernacle, in the middle. Only after the Mishkan (representing the concept of HaShem's Divine Presence, and which was to be in the center of this traveling formation) was erected in the second year was there a command to move in formation. People will object if you arbitrarily demand that they be assigned to specific roles. But if people realize that the purpose is for the sake of accomplishing a common goal; if they realize that they are bound together for one centrality, then they will joyfully contribute with individual roles, knowing that this is the only way for a team or a nation to function. Only then can they reach the level of "one man with one heart" and merit the receiving of the Torah.

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From: yated-usa@ttec.com

Halacha Discussion: Parshas Bamidbar by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt
You shall appoint Aaron and his sons and they shall safeguard their kehunah (3:10) RESPECT AND HONOR: HOW TO TREAT A KOHEN

Included in Hashem's commandment to Moshe to appoint his brother Aharon and his sons as kohanim is the Biblical command: 'You shall sanctify him he shall remain holy to you'(1). The Torah commands us to acknowledge the sanctity of kohanim by showing them respect and giving them preferential treatment, since they are the ones who are entrusted to do Hashem's work in the Mishkan and Beis ha-Mikdash. This mitzvah is divided into two parts: a) the mitzvah of honoring a kohen; b) the prohibition against using the services of a kohen for one's needs. Let us elaborate: The Mitzvah of Honoring a Kohen How do we honor a kohen? Whenever a blessing is recited in public, a kohen should be the one asked to recite it. Thus a kohen is the first one to be called up to the Torah whenever it is read. At meal time, he is the one who is asked to recite Kiddush, Birkas ha-Motzi and Birkas ha-Mazon. In addition, a kohen is served first, he is asked to speak first and is generally given more respect than a yisrael or a levi(2). Some poskim(3) mention that a levi is given priority over a yisrael in all of the above honors, just as he is called to the Torah before a yisrael. Other poskim hold that a levi does not take precedence at all(4). May a kohen forego this honor? A kohen may be mochel [lit.: release others from paying him] the honor due him [except being called up first to the Torah](5). The reason why a kohen may be mochel his honor is based on the Rabbinic dictum(6) that "one honors a man by doing his will." Since the kohen wants to bestow upon someone else the honor due him, that, in turn, becomes his honor(7). If a yisrael recites Birkas ha-Mazon in the presence of a kohen, he must ask for the kohen's permission. It is not sufficient to merely say 'bi-reshus ha-kohen'(8). As stated above, the only exception to the rule that a kohen may forego his honor is that he must be called up first to the

Torah. This is a Rabbinic edict instituted by the Sages of the Mishnah, who insisted that the kohen always accept his aliyah lest he defer to some people and not to others, and thus cause discord among members of the shul(9). Are there any exceptions to this requirement? -The head of a household where a meal is being served is not obligated to offer a kohen guest the honor of reciting ha-motzi(10) or Birkas ha-Mazon(11). -If a yisrael is a greater talmid chacham than a kohen, the yisrael is not obligated to honor the kohen. It is, nevertheless, proper for him to do so, and one who does so is rewarded with longevity(12). -If the kohen is an am ha-aretz, a yisrael-who is a talmid chacham-is not permitted to honor the kehunah of such a kohen, since he is thereby degrading the honor of the Torah(13). The Prohibition of Using the Services of a Kohen The second half of the obligation to honor a kohen is the prohibition against having him perform "services" for the benefit of a yisrael(14). It is forbidden to ask a kohen to serve a yisrael or to send him on an errand, etc. Even if a kohen waives his status and allows a yisrael to use his services, this should not be done l'chatchilah, and certainly, the yisrael should never ask a kohen to perform a lowly task for him like emptying the garbage(15), etc. For this reason, it is preferable that a kohen not enter a profession which may require his yisrael employer to order him to engage in degrading types of work(16). When is it permitted to benefit from the services of a kohen? -If a kohen receives payment or if he is serving a distinguished person and derives pleasure from serving him, it is permitted to ask the kohen to serve a yisrael(17). Similarly, if a kohen offers to serve a yisrael without being told to do so, it is permitted to accept his offer(18). -Some poskim allow a yisrael to use the services of a kohen am ha'aretz, although not in a demeaning manner(19). A kohen who violates the sanctity of the kehunah by marrying a divorcee or entering a cemetery when he is forbidden to do so, etc., forfeits the privileges of the kehunah. It is not a mitzvah to honor him, nor are there any restrictions on asking him to perform services. Such a kohen is excluded from nesias kapayim as well(20). -The poskim debate whether these halachos pertain to a kohen who is a minor(21) or who has a blemish which renders him unfit for the avodah(22). Why are some people not careful to observe these halachos? There are some people who, although generally meticulous in mitzvah observance, are not careful about their treatment of kohanim. The poskim offer two possible reasons for their behavior: -Now that the Beis ha-Mikdash is destroyed, this mitzvah does not apply-except for those who conduct themselves lifnim mi-shuras ha-din(23); -With the passage of time, the lineage and yichus of the kohanim have become blurred. Thus we are not positive who is a kohen(24). These objections notwithstanding, the majority of the poskim agree that the mitzvah of honoring a kohen applies even nowadays(25) and we ought not doubt the purity of lineage of our kohanim(26).

1 Vayikra 21:8. There is a dispute among the Rishonim if this is a mitzvas assei min ha -Torah or mi- d'Rabbanan-See Magen Avraham 201:4 and Korban Nesanel 300 (Rosh, Gitin 5:20). 2 Mishnah Berurah 201:13. 3 Mishnah Berurah 201:12; Kaf ha-Chayim 167:101. 4 Aruch ha-Shulchan 201:4. This is the prevailing custom-Ben Ish Chai (Korach 14). 5 Rama 128:45; Mishnah Berurah 201:13. 6 Originally appearing in Sefer Chasidim 152. 7 Shulchan Aruch Harav 128:60; Eishel Avraham 128:45. 8 Mishnah Berurah 167:75. 9 Mishnah Berurah 135:9. The custom is that even a private minyan always calls up the kohen first. See Sha'ar ha -Tziyon 12. See Igros Moshe O.C. 2:34; 3:20 for possible exceptions. 10 Mishnah Berurah 167:73. 11 See Sha'ar ha -Tziyon 167:65 and Beir Halachah 201:1; Aruch ha-Shulchan 201:4. 12 O.C. 167:14 and Mishnah Berurah 71; 201:12. 13 O.C. 201:2; Mishnah Berurah 167:70. 14 According to some poskim, a kohen cannot serve another kohen either. Others allow this-see Kesav Sofer O.C. 15; Beir Halachah 128:45; Aruch ha-Shulchan 128:75; Kaf ha-Chayim 128:283. 15 Mishnah Berurah 128:175; Yabia Omer 6:22. See also the Chafetz Chayim's opening remarks to Shemiras ha-Lashon where he rules that one who speaks lashon ha-ra about a kohen [in the presence of the kohen] transgresses the halachah of honoring a kohen. 16 Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Nishmas Avraham O.C. 128:10. 17 Mishnah Berurah 128:175. 18 Eishel Avraham 128:45; Aruch ha-Shulchan 128:72. 19 Beir Halachah 128:45. Aruch ha-Shulchan 128:72 disagrees. 20 O.C. 128:40-41. 21 Mishnah Berurah 282:12 and Sha'ar ha -Tziyon 15 quotes a dispute between Magen Avraham and R' Akiva Eiger concerning this. See Emes l'Yaakov al ha -Torah, pg. 391. 22 Most poskim maintain that a kohen who has a blemish is included in this mitzvah. See, however, Minchas Chinuch 269, Aruch ha-Shulchan 128:72 and Responsa Avnei Cheifetz 71. 23 R' Tam (quoted by Taz 128:39); Mekor Chayim 128:45. 24 Magen Avraham 201:4. Many other poskim are also of the opinion that the kohanim's yichus is questionable-see Y.D. 322 Taz 5 and Shach 9; Sh'elas Ya'avetz 155; Chazon Ish, Shvi'is 5:12. See also Rama O.C. 457:2 and Mishnah Berurah 22. 25 Mishnah Berurah 128:172; Aruch ha-Shulchan 71. See Rivash 94. 26 Maharit 1:149; Be'er Heitev O.C. 128:83; Aruch ha-Shulchan O.C. 128:72; Y.D. 305:55.

From yated-usa@ttec.com

Kortz Un Sharf-Short and Sweet Parsha Vertlachby Shaya Gottlieb

"Seu Es Rosh Kol Adas Bnei Yisroel" -Count every member of Bnei Yisroel 1:2 Hashem commanded Moshe to count the Bnei Yisroel, because there is a k'lal, "Dovor Shebiminyan, Afilu B'elef Lo Botul".

Anything that is counted because of its value does not become obliterated even when mixed into one thousand other items. Since Klal Yisroel were counted, they will not blend into the other nations, but remain apart.

-Chidushei Harim o o o "Miben Esrim Shono U'maaluh Kol Yotzei Tzovo" -from twenty years and older, all who go to war 1:3 When one reaches the age of twenty, one becomes liable to be punished by the Heavenly Bais Din. Then a person becomes a soldier, one who wages battle with his yetzer hora. This is the meaning of the Mishna, 'ben esrim lirdof', a man of twenty must run away from his evil inclination. -The Gerrer Rebbe o o o Although the Bnei Yisroel were counted from the age of twenty, when one becomes liable to heavenly punishment, they were worthy of going out to war, because they fulfilled the possuk, "one who is afraid of his sins shall not go out to war." None of these pious people had sins to be afraid of. -Maharal Charif

"Ish, Ish Limateh, Ish Rosh Lvais Avosov Hu" Every man to his tribe, to his father's house 1:4 Every tribe shall take a nasi, the head of his own family. It is relatively easy to become a leader amongst strangers, who do not know one's shortcomings. However, it is most difficult to lead amongst one's own family members and friends. However, one who is respected in ones own family is worthy of being a nasi. -Rav Moshe Chafetz

"L'vais Avosov Hu"- the word, 'Hu' is often interpreted by Chazal to mean, "Him, from beginning to end." He is the same person, on the same madreiga, throughout. Often when a person is promoted to a leadership position, he becomes arrogant and conceited. Therefore, the Torah warns the nasi, "Do not become arrogant, do not change your nature." One does not become a leader through one's power, glory and wealth, which are external factors, but through 'rosh l'vais avosov', being worthy of the exalted position. The yichus must begin from him alone, and be worthy of continuing through his family. -Kli Chemda o o o "Elah Kruei Hoaduh" - these are the exalted ones amongst the nation 1:17 Klal Yisroel may not embark upon any decision, minor or major, without consulting with these leaders first. Therefore, they are called 'kruei hoadoh'. -Even Ezra

The Gaon of Vilna told the parnassim of the city that they should not call him to any gathering, unless it involves a new decision. The parnassim once invited him to a gathering, where they decided not to allow any paupers into the city of Vilna. "Why did you invite me?" asked the Gaon. "This is not a new decision! This is an old decision, dating back to Sodom and Amorah."

From yated-usa@ttec.com

Peninim Ahl HaTorah: Parshas Bamidbar by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum
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And these are the generations of Aharon and Moshe and these are the names of the sons of Aharon. (3:1,2) The Torah declares that it is about to enumerate the generations of Aharon and Moshe. Yet, it only mentions Aharon's sons. Rashi explains that this is consistent, since Moshe taught Torah to Aharon's sons. Thus, we infer that whoever teaches his friend's son Torah is considered as if he had fathered them. The Torah forges a bond between rebbe and talmid which is almost biological in nature. This means that the love that exists between a father and son should be nurtured between a rebbe and talmid. The bond between teacher and student is the subject of a talk which Horav Yitzchak Hutner, zl, gave to a group of yeshivah students. He said that when Rav Chaim Volozhiner, zl started his famous yeshivah, he introduced a new terminology to define a student of a yeshivah. No longer was the student referred to as talmid ha'yeshivah, but rather, ben ha'yeshivah, son of the yeshivah. He felt that once a boy enrolls in a Torah institution, it becomes his home, and his rebbe, his source of Torah, becomes like a parent. A yeshivah is not simply a place where one receives an education. A yeshivah is a place where one learns a way of life. He is

provided with the tools to exist and thrive in this world. It molds his personality, as it shapes his perspective. The yeshivah is the lifeblood of a ben Torah, and, thus, a student is called a ben ha'yeshivah. A true rebbe should view himself as a parent to his students. The decision he makes for a student should be made with the same care and love that he employs when making decisions for his family. Every student should have individual status before his rebbe. Just as a parent is sensitive to the individual needs of each one of his children and does not treat them collectively, so, too, should a teacher relate to the singular needs of his students on a one-to-one basis. Horav Mishkovsky, zl, was once delivering the eulogy at the funeral of a student of the yeshivah who had passed away in his youth. With moving words, he spoke at the gravesite. Heartbroken, he expressed his fatherly love for the student. He spoke as a father who had lost a part of himself. He said, "The Torah obligates a shomer, watchman, to swear two oaths in the event of a mishap with the object he was to guard. He swears that he was not negligent in its care and that he had received no personal benefit from it. When parents send their son to a yeshivah, they are entrusting the Rosh Hayeshivah/ rebbe with their child. Consequently, as the rebbe, I should make these two oaths. That would be the case if I was a mere watchman. Just as a father is not obligated to make these oaths, I, too, feel that I am not obligated to make these oaths. This talmid is my child!" This is a very moving statement made by a heartbroken rebbe at the fresh grave of his beloved student. Does it apply always-with all students and all teachers? If it does not-then something is very wrong with their relationship. It is not the purpose of this paper to lay blame, but rather to raise the issue and perhaps to succeed in making people think. In a recent orthodox periodical, an observant parent wrote with indignation how his child was "subjected" to the "domineering" rules and regulations of his yeshivah at the expense of his parents. Imagine the "chutzpah" of a Rosh Hayeshivah not to permit a son to have dinner with his parents in a certain restaurant in Eretz Yisrael during the parents' visit, because the restaurant was not the appropriate place for a yeshivah student to be. Unfortunately, this parent's understanding of the rebbe/talmid relationship is apparently myopic. When we send our children to a Torah institution, we should demonstrate that we trust the rebbe to render the correct and proper educational decisions that will nurture our child's emotional, spiritual and moral development. Furthermore, if the parent has a problem with his child's yeshivah, he always has the option of switching schools. To denigrate the rebbe and the school, however, does nothing more than to defeat the ultimate purpose of the parent. Perhaps, if we would permit those entrusted and experienced in the area of Torah chinuch to do their job, we might be pleasantly surprised with the products they produce!

Do not let the tribe of the Kehati family be cut off this is what you shall do that they shall live and assign them, every man to his work and his burden. (4:19,20) In the Midrash there is a dispute regarding the attitude of Bnei Kehas about their dangerous work. Rabbi Elazar ben Pedas opines that they were so in awe of the sanctity of the Aron Ha'kodesh and the hazards that accompanied it, that they ran to carry the other holy vessels instead. Rabbi Shmuel ben Nachman contends that, on the contrary, despite the risk of death, Bnei Kehas were eager to care for the Aron Hakodesh. Horav Ze'ev Weinberger, Shlita, comments that people exhibit varied attitudes in relating to the Aron, even in contemporary times. Some Jews, although they are great scholars, tend to shy away from taking a stand in any area which presents a risk to their welfare or position. Thus, they defer the great halachic issues, whose ramifications are serious and vital to the collective health of Klal Yisrael or of their respective communities, to those who have more ego than erudition. Others have no fear of the Aron; the sanctity of a given subject does not serve as a deterrent to them from rendering decisions concerning Jewish law for which they have no knowledge or skill. In those days, at least, when Elazar ben Aharon declared who was to perform a specific avodah, people adhered to his word. It is regrettable that today, even when a gadol, leader of the generation, specifies the criteria for who may and should render halachic decisions, some individuals feel that they have the authority to disagree. Today, if one is not innovative, people view him as out of touch

with the times. Unfortunately, they do not realize that halachah is timeless and above innovation.

From jr@sco.COM Thu Jun 5 02:15:25 1997 [From 2 years ago]
bamidbar.97 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Parshas Bamidbar
(Shiur date: 6/1/76)

The Ramban (1:45) asks what was the purpose in Moshe counting Bnay Yisrael at this time? The Ramban offers two explanations, The first is that the Torah constantly shows the kindness of Hashem in how He took a small group of 70 people and transformed them into a mighty nation. We must acknowledge and appreciate the Chasdei Hashem. The Ramban offers a second reason: it was important for each Jew to pass before Moshe and Aharon so that they should garner a Zechus Vchayim, merit and life, in that Moshe and Aharon would pray for them and they would be blessed and would continue to grow in population and strength without any negative aspects, as the Shekalim they were to give would act as the ransom, or Kofer, for them.

The Rav explained the Ramban: there are 2 purposes or goals associated with the act of counting. In the first case, one simply wishes to know the total amount of an item. For example, one wishes to know how much money he has in his pocket. He has no interest in the individual coins or bills, it is the desire or need to reach his goal, the knowledge of how much money he has, that spurs him to count. Another example is the counting of the Omer, where the ultimate goal of counting 50 days is to arrive at the fiftieth day when the Shtay Halechem were brought. The counting of each day, in and of itself, is not important. However it is necessary to count each day in order to arrive at the final goal.

The second type of counting is of a completely opposite nature: where one desires to savor each individual item that is counted. The ultimate goal is to recognize and appreciate each individual, and not to be concerned with the total number.

How was it possible for Moshe to know each individual? After all there were 600,000 men above the age of 20? How could he possibly know their families also! We can readily understand how Moshe was able to gather the elders of the people according to the command of Hashem, since they were a small number and they were the ones who helped him to lead the people from exile. But how could he know all the people?

When Bnay Yisrael made the golden calf, Hashem tells Moshe to go down because his people have sinned. Moshe responds "Lama Yecheh Apcha B'amecha", why should You become angry with Your nation. Moshe is saying that these are not his people because he does not know each and everyone personally. They are Hashem's people, as He knows each one. After the breaking of the first Luchos, Moshe was transformed from a Shaliach Lholacha, an agent of the sender, delivering a message from Hashem to His people, into the Rabban Shel Yisrael, teacher of Israel responsible for transmitting Torah Shbeal Peh, which was now separated from Torah Shebichtav. A simple messenger need not know each and every person who is the target of the message, it is sufficient that the sender of the message knows each one.

Now that Moshe became Rabban Shel Yisrael, he had to learn about the life of each of his students. A rebbe must know his students. After he has gotten to know each one individually, he will be familiar with each situation, and when the need should arise he will be in a position to more effectively pray for that person. Moshe could no longer say "Lama Yecheh Apcha B'amecha", they were now his people, each and every one of them, and he was responsible for their welfare and well being.

This is what the Ramban means when he says that each person would pass before Moshe, the Adon Haneviim, and Aharon. They counted the people by going from house to house, and in the process learning about each family, how they lived, their problems and their joys. For the leader must know all his people. The Gemara (Berachos 28a) notes this as well, when it describes the rebuke given to Rabban Gamliel who expressed shock upon seeing the squalid living conditions of Rabbi Yehoshua. As the leader of his

generation, it was incumbent upon him to learn about the lives of his people and students. Only through this understanding of their needs, can Moshe and Aharon, and any other leader truly be capable of praying for and interceding on behalf of his people.

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il] * TORAH WEEKLY
* Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshas Bamidbar

___The Longest Marriage in the World___ "Take a census (lit. 'lift up the head') of the sons of Kehas ... according to their fathers' households" (4:1) Once upon a time, there was a princess who married a king. The king loved the princess very much. He wrote into their marriage agreement that he would give her a king's ransom in jewels and palaces. Shortly after the wedding, the king was called away on urgent business. Before he left, he told his young bride that he might be away for a long time, but she could trust that he would eventually return to her. A month went by. Then two. A year passed. There was no sign of the king. Two years went by. After five years, the people grew restless and decided to elect a new monarch. They told the princess to forget the king, that he would never return. But she said she knew that he would come back. When it became known that a new king had ascended the throne, eligible suitors started to arrive at the door of the princess, attempting to woo her. She turned down flat every offer. She could never think of marrying another. Eventually, everyone forgot the king, except the princess. Many, many years later, the king suddenly returned. He was amazed and overjoyed that the princess was still waiting for him. He asked the princess "How were you able to stay faithful to me for so long?" She answered, "Whenever I used to get a little sad and depressed, I would take out my marriage contract from the cupboard and read all the things that you promised me. I knew it wasn't an illusion, because it was written in black and white." G-d is the King. The Jewish People are the bride. The Torah is our marriage contract. Over three thousand years ago we went under the chupa wedding canopy with the Master of the World. This year, on Friday the 21st of May, we celebrate our 3,311th wedding anniversary. We don't see the King, but despite His "absence," the Jewish People still faithfully await His "return." What keeps us going? The inviolable pact He made with us at Sinai. Ever since the nations gave up on the King, they have tried to woo the Jewish People away from waiting. However, as a nation, we have never succumbed to their blandishments. With every year, the wait grows more difficult; further from that wedding day some three thousand years ago. But we are still here, and we know that His return is imminent.

In the weekly Parsha of Bamidbar, the Torah speaks about Kehas the son of Levi. Levi had three sons: Gershon, Kehas and Merari. Their families were charged with various aspects of setting up and transporting the Mishkan. There are some interesting anomalies in the way the Torah speaks of these three families. In the census of Kehas it says "Lift up the head of the sons of Kehas ... to their families, to the house of their fathers." However, when the Torah mentions the family of Gershon, it adds the words "them as well." When speaking about the third son, Merari, however, it doesn't mention to "lift his head" at all. What does all this signify? The three sons of Levi represent three eras in the history of the Jewish People. Kehas hints to the time that the Jewish People will live in their land, concentrated and gathered together in one congregation. The name Kehas comes from the word kehilla, congregation. During this epoch, the greatness of the Jewish People will flow directly from their illustrious ancestors, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. Thus their "head is lifted up ... to the house of their fathers." Their greatness will come from the connection to the Avos (Patriarchs). Then comes the era of the Diaspora. The name Gershon comes from the word meaning exile. The Jewish People will wander from place to place, never finding a permanent rest. Nevertheless it will still be possible to say: "Lift up the head of the sons of Gershon, them as well, to the house of their fathers." Like the sons of Kehas, their honor and their distinction will come from their connection to their fathers, as well. The last phase of Jewish History is embodied by Merari. This will be the bitterest chapter, when millions will be

lost either physically or spiritually. The name Merari comes from the word meaning bitter (like the maror, bitter herbs we eat at the Seder). When a marriage breaks down, the first thing to go is the celebration of the anniversary. When paralysis in Torah observance sets in, the first casualty is Shavuot. Pesach has been immortalized by Maxwell House. Bris mila circumcision is for life. Friday night chicken soup dies hard. Everyone wants to wave a lulav and esrog. But Shavuot? What do you do on Shavuot? On Shavuot, we celebrate our anniversary. In this bitterest of epochs, the lonely bride who waits for the return of the King is symbolized by the tribe of Merari. Of Merari, the Torah does not say "lift up his head," for these last generations do not derive their honor from their connection to "the house of their fathers." The generations who will survive a holocaust both of body and soul will need no connection to their ancestors to establish their worth. Their merit and their greatness will be self-evident. They are like the princess who waits for the King.

... And Counting... "Hashem spoke to Moshe...saying: Take a census of the entire assembly of the Children of Israel" (1:1,2) Why did G-d want Moshe to count the Jewish People? Didn't He already know how many they were? Imagine you come back from doing the shopping, and your spouse takes out a pack of granulated sugar and starts to count the number of sugar grains in the pack. You would probably reach for the phone and call the doctor. However, when the bank statement drops through the letterbox, we examine every penny to make sure there are no mistakes. We only count things that are important to us. G-d wanted Moshe to count the Jewish People to show us how important we are to Him. For every Jewish soul is an essential part of the creation.

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Recommended Reading List Ramban Introduction to Bamidbar 1:3 The Draft Age 1:45 The Reason for Counting 2:2 The Organization of the Camp 3:14 The Levi'im 4:16 The Role of Elazar ben Aharon Ibn Ezra 1:19 Organization of the Camp Sforno Introduction to Bamidbar

From: Shlomo Katz[SMTP:skatz@torah.org] Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz Contributing Editor: Daniel Dadusc Bemidbar

Sponsored by The Siegel family, in memory of Dr. Manfred R Lehmann a"h father of Barbie Lehmann Siegel Helen Spector, in memory of her mother, Rose S. Greene a"h

"Do not let the tribe of the family of Kehat be cut off from among the Levites." (4:18) The midrash comments on this verse: "Do not let the tribe of Levi be cut off - regarding this it is written (Tehilim 33:18), 'Behold, the eye of Hashem is on those who fear Him, upon those who await His kindness.' But, [the midrash asks,] do not all creations need Hashem's kindness? Nevertheless, the tribe of Levi awaits Hashem's kindness more than do others because they have no portion in the Land." R' Yosef Yoizel Horowitz z"l (the "Alter of Novardok"; died 1919) asks: Why does the midrash misquote the pasuk? (The pasuk refers to the family of Kehat while the midrash speaks of all Levi'im.) He explains: Our pasuk contains a mitzvah to recognize and protect the special status of the Levi'im from the family of Kehat, for they had the most important role of all Levi'im during the era of the mishkan. However, the pasuk cannot be understood literally to mean that the special role of the Kehat family will never be lost, for today, when there is no Temple, it is lost. The midrash therefore teaches us that there is another Levite-like role that can be attained today, not only by the family of Kehat and not only by Levi'im, but by all Jews. What is that role? Our sages teach that working to earn a living is not inconsistent with the obligation to trust that Hashem will provide one's needs. Nevertheless, one who wants to is permitted to place his fate completely in Hashem's hands. In this way, one imitates the Levi'im. (Madregat Ha'adam: Darchei Habitachon, ch.9)

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<http://www.jpost.co.il/Columns/Article-3.html>
SHABBAT SHALOM: Faith is a risky undertaking
By RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(May 13) "Now those that pitch their camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the divisions of Judah, according to their hosts; the prince of the children of Judah being Nahshon the son of Aminadav." (Num. 2:3)

For as long as I can remember, Orthodox Judaism has been perceived by much of the world - even the Orthodox world - as a "conservative," sheltered, old-fashioned way of life, unwilling to take risks in the face of new challenges.

A Midrashic comment on this week's portion of Bamidbar stresses a behavioral and genealogical quality of Nahshon, prince of the tribe of Judah, which rejects the idea that a conservative, risk-free existence is to be sought. After all, Nahshon is known to us as the individual who risked his life by leaping into the Red Sea before it was split. It was only after he demonstrated his faith that the Almighty split the sea. The Midrash (also recorded in B.T. Bava Batra 91a) points out that the courageous Nahshon had four sons, including Elimelech, husband of Naomi, as well as Shalmon, father of Boaz; hence Nahshon was father and uncle of two major personalities in the Scroll of Ruth, which we read in honor of Shavuot.

Now we don't usually think of the Scroll of Ruth as a "book of risks." Nevertheless, I would like to suggest that in linking Elimelech and Boaz to Nahshon, the Midrash wants to stress which kinds of risks are favored and which are not.

The fact is that courage and risk-taking - or the lack thereof - may be seen as an underlying theme of the whole book of Bamidbar. This fourth book of the Torah records the Israelites' 40 years of wandering in the desert. When it opens we do not yet know that the people will be made to wander, but by the time the book closes it becomes clear that the people have failed their first major test and are being punished with the sojourn in the desert.

When the spies return with a frightening report about the Promised Land and their perceived inability to conquer it, the Israelites demonstrate a total lack of courage and faith. They wail, they tremble, they plead not to go on. Apparently they have become too accustomed to the secure desert life - manna for food, a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night directing their travel - to plunge into the unknown and attempt the conquest and settlement of Israel.

But the Torah wants the Israelites to act with courage, to make the first heroic and even dangerous moves which come with independence and responsibility. Nahshon at the shore of the Red Sea shines as the antithesis of a cowardly "desert generation." Because of his faith and daring, the people were saved.

Indeed, the Gaon of Vilna points out that the Torah first describes the Israelites as having gone "into the midst of the sea on the dry land" (Ex. 14:22), and later "on dry land in the midst of the sea" (Ex. 14:29). The initial description refers to Nahshon and his followers, who risked their lives by leaping into the raging waters. God made a miracle for them, the waters splitting into dry land and serving as a wall, homa, on the right and left. The latter description refers to the rest of the Israelites - who only entered after the dry land appeared; for them also the waters became a wall, but this time without the letter vav, which can also spell hema, which means anger.

Nahshon's ability to take risks was transmitted to his son and nephew. Hence, the Scroll of Ruth closes with the names of 10 generations from Peretz (son of Judah) to King David, and Nahshon appears right in the center, the pivotal figure between the age of the patriarchs and the progenitor of the future messiah. But while Nahshon and Boaz are to be praised for their risk-taking, Elimelech can only be reviled for his.

When a famine strikes Bethlehem - the ancestral homeland of Elimelech - he decides to start a new life in Moab. Undoubtedly, the ability to risk entering a strange environment demonstrates courage, but a negative and problematic brand of courage. After all, his motivation was greed. He refused

to share his bounty with his starving kinsmen, and was willing to leave his homeland for the sake of his wealth. He also is apparently willing to risk the Jewish identity of his children. Tragedy strikes: Elimelech dies, and his sons - logically - marry Moabite women. His progeny die as well, causing Elimelech, from a Jewish point of view, to have reaped only oblivion.

In contrast, Boaz does not leave Bethlehem during the famine. And when the challenge arises to perform an act of loving-kindness for Naomi and redeem Elimelech's land, as well as to marry Ruth - a convert - Boaz assumes the financial obligation and the social risk. The descendant from this union turns out to be King David, from whom the messianic line emerges.

Risk is positive, and often even mandatory, from a Jewish perspective. The question we have to ask regards the motivation, and the answer will generally determine the result.

Perhaps the father of all risk-takers was Abraham, who was willing to forsake his past and put his future at risk (binding his son to the altar) as a result of the Divine command.

Taking risks in order to fulfill God's desire is the highest expression of religious commitment. Because Abraham walked into the unknown in order to follow the Divine charge, he is called the first Jew; because he was ready to sacrifice his beloved son to the Almighty on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem, Jerusalem is our Holy City from which the Eternal Divine Presence never departs.

Taking risks for God is therefore also the theme of the Jerusalem Day we celebrate at this time of year.

are to be aware that our numbers will somehow always be limited and that we will never achieve great numbers relative to other great populations in the world. Pogrom and forced conversions have decreased our numbers over the centuries, and we have been decimated by assimilation and intermarriage and by voluntary spiritual surrender, and by terrible living conditions of poverty, poor sanitation and the pressures of being a persecuted minority. Thus, in my opinion, the miracle of the fact that there are still millions of Jews in the world - proud Jews, Jews by choice and faith - is a far more important point of attention than the sad reality of the fact that there are so few Jews, relatively speaking, in the world.

The fact that there are so few Jews in the world places a great responsibility on the Jews that do exist. The world is preserved by the few, the righteous, the moral and the kind. Our father, Avraham, and our mother, Sarah, built the civilized world by education and example, even though they were a lonely couple in their world. The few are the ones that lead and guide the many, for good or for better. The realization of the importance of the individual is one of the cardinal principles of Jewish belief and behavior. In fact, the source of much of Jewish self-pride and positive stubbornness over the ages was the realization that I belong to the few and therefore I am special and unique - and the basic attitude of Judaism and its reason for its survival is that of being special and unique. So, the numbers of Bamidbar teach us an ancillary lesson, which is as important as the direct count and numbers of Israel itself. Shabat Shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein
Shabat Shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein

<http://www.wein-destiny.com/parasha.htm>

BAMIDBAR

In 1950, according to the census of the Jewish Federations in North America at that time, the Jewish population of North America was approximately six million people. That meant that there were six million people in North America who identified themselves as Jews. According to the natural increase in population as exhibited in the general population in North America there should now be at least fifteen million people in North America who identify themselves as Jews. In stark reality, however, there are barely five million people in North America who do so. That means that there are ten million people who have disappeared as potential Jews in the last half-century, and their absence is out of personal choice and not external enmity. That statistic is certainly one of the saddest ones for

Jews in this doleful century of ours that is now coming to a close. Sixty years ago, there were nineteen million Jews in the world. Today, there are approximately thirteen million Jews in the world. A half-century after the Holocaust, we have not made good the numbers that the Germans and their cohorts killed. This ugly and sad fact only intensifies the tragedy of the Holocaust in the current Jewish world.

In the three countings of the Jewish people in the desert, one of which is the main theme of the Torah reading of Bamidbar, there is also no noticeable increase anywhere or any time in the numbers of the Jewish people during their forty-year stay in the desert of Sinai. For the missing ten million American Jews there are many reasons that can be marshaled to explain the disaster. Assimilation, an astronomical rate of intermarriage, late marriages, feminist careerism, zero population growth and in fact minus population growth in the Jewish community, and the ravages of modern American society, all can be cited as reasons for the shrinkage of the North American Jewish community. But what are the reasons for the static population of the Jewish people in the Sinai desert? None of the reasons cited above as applying to North America were valid as regarding the generation of the Exodus from Egypt.

The Torah itself has an attitude towards Jewish numbers and population. The Jews were told explicitly by God: "I have not chosen you because of your great numbers; rather, you are to be the smallest of all nations." There seems to be some sort of Divine brake upon Jewish population explosion after the Exodus from Egypt. We are commanded to be numerous, to enlarge the Jewish people and its spiritual influence in the world. Nevertheless, we

From: Rabbi Pinchas Winston[SMTP:winston@torah.org] Subject: Perceptions - Parashas Bamidbar & Shavuot: When It Really Counts

Count the heads of the entire congregation of the Children of Israel ... >From twenty years and over--all who can go out as part of the host from Israel should be counted according to their hosts by you and Aharon. (Bamidbar 1:2-3) On such a technical verse, the Kli Yakar asks a very non-technical question: "If this age was chosen for the sake of the dwelling of the Divine Presence, then why was 'all who can go out as part of the host' mentioned? What does the host have to do with the dwelling of the Divine Presence? ..." His answer is even less technical: "It is as we explained earlier, that this counting was in order to know if there were 22,000 people in each of the twenty-eight camps of the Divine Presence, in order that it should resemble the Heavenly Hosts. This is why it mentions going out as part of the host, as if to say, part of the Heavenly Host ..." (Kli Yakar) This opens up a discussion about an idea that we may already know about, but don't always think about, but ought to think about. We live in a very physical world, and we know that, somewhere, "Up There," there is a very spiritual world. We know the two are connected, because if they weren't, then this world could not continue to exist. However, the nature of that connection is not clear to many, and because it is not clear, they forget about the connection almost completely. The Talmud speaks of a Yerushalayim Shel L'Matah, and a Yerushalayim Shel L'Ma'alah--an Earthly Jerusalem, and a Heavenly Jerusalem. Elsewhere, it is mentioned that there is a Bais HaMikdosh Shel L'Matah, and a Bais HaMikdosh Shel L'Ma'alah--an Early Temple, and Heavenly Temple. In other words, for every spiritual component found in the everyday Physical World below, there can be found a counterpart in the everyday Spiritual World above. It was to this reality that Ya'akov referred when he awoke from his prophetic dream and exclaimed: "Indeed, G-d is in this place, and yet I didn't know it." He was frightened and said, "How awesome is this place! It is none other than the House of G-d, and this is the Gate of Heaven." (Bereishis 28:16-17) The commentators explain that Ya'akov already knew that Mt. Moriah--the past place of Akeidas Yitzchak and the future place of the Temples--was a very holy place. However, what he learned that night in his dream was that it corresponded to the Temple Mount Above, which made it the holiest place on earth. Elsewhere, the Midrash (and Talmud) states that when Nebuchadnezzar proudly conquered Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and exiled the remaining tribes into Babylonia, a Heavenly Voice called out: Your grind already ground flour;

you have killed an already killed people. (Eichah Rabbosai 1:43). The Nefesh HaChaim explains that this means that long before Jewish enemies are able to destroy Jewish sites, or the people themselves, the Jewish people have already done so Above, perhaps decades, or even centuries ago. In other words, today's destruction may be the result of a sins and a decree from decades ago! (Indeed, the Chofetz Chaim is said to have warned many times in the late twenties that "millions of Jews are going to die, yet no one is doing anything about it!" Apparently, the Chofetz Chaim saw, in his day, the seeds of a future disaster and tried, in vain, to warn others about it.) How? Because, every time a Jew sins, G-d forbid, its effect, though not immediately noticeable down here on earth, is immediately noticeable Above. Hence, before Nebuchadnetzar could destroy the First Temple on earth, and Titus, the Second Temple, the Jewish people had to first "destroy," or at least spiritually damage the Heavenly Temple Above through anti-Torah behavior. This spiritual "damage" left the physical temple devoid of its connection to its spiritual counterpart--like a body missing its soul--and like "already ground flour" ... and the Jewish people, "like an already killed people ..." If teshuvah is not forthcoming at some time in the near future, and sinning persists, then the spiritual erosion increases Above. It is only a matter of time before the results shows up here Below on earth, and in everyday life. Likewise, if teshuvah is performed, though the results are not immediately noticeable Below they are Above, and eventually the blessing of such teshuvah makes it into physical, everyday life as well. In conclusion, we have to constantly be aware of the fact that every spiritual component in the Physical World we live in has its spiritual counterpart Above, which is affected by everything--literally, everything--we do. Though we cannot always see the effects of our actions, the good and the bad ones, in everyday life, we have to know that all we do Down Here affects all that happens Up There. It is like a shadow that mimics a person's every movement.

Shavuos Next week, b"H, is Shavuos: The Time of the Giving of Our Torah. It is the day ("days" outside of Israel) that the Jewish people celebrate the time when G-d's Presence came down over Mt. Sinai and gave the Ten Commandments, just before Moshe ascended the mountain for the next forty days to receive the rest of the Torah and the first set of Tablets. Which he promptly broke. As the Torah recounts, on the seventeenth day of Tammuz, precisely forty days after that wondrous sixth day of Sivan, the golden calf was built, worshipped, and destroyed. Its builders and worshippers met a similar fate, and the non-participating survivors did not get off free either. In fact, we're still feeling the effects of the golden calf to this very day. If so, then one could ask, what joy is there in Shavuos? What good is the beginning of the celebration if the end of that celebration was destruction and doom? The answer is partly in this midrash: ... And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day (ha-shishi). (Bereishis 1:31) The sixth day ... The letter "heh" [preceding the word "ha-shishi"] is extra ... to say that [G-d] made a condition with them [creation]: "If the Jewish people accept the Five Books of the Torah, [then it is good; if not, then you will resort back to null and void]." (Shabbos 88a) In the verse, "the sixth day" refers to the sixth day of creation. However, because of the use of the letter "heh" with respect to the sixth day, and not for the preceding days of creation, the Talmud reveals that the letter heh, which represents the number five, is an allusion to the Five Books of Moses to be given in the future on a different sixth day--the sixth day of Sivan, in the year 2448/1313 BCE. Furthermore, says the Talmud, it will be the acceptance of Torah on that day that will justify the continued existence of creation. Rejection of Torah, G-d forbid, would spell the end of creation once-and-for-all. All of this is indicated by the extra "heh" on the word "shishi"--sixth day. But didn't we accept Torah, and in effect, reject it shortly thereafter by allowing the golden calf to be built and worshipped? Apparently not. The proof of this? We are still here, albeit living with some chaos, but we're still here. It seems that, by NATIONALLY accepting Torah on the sixth day of Sivan, the Jewish people saved creation from reverting back to null and void! Subsequent rejections of Torah half been both half-hearted, and only partially, and though they have warranted national suffering, the world has still been allowed to precede towards its Messianic finale. The sixth day of Sivan, 2448, was a singular opportunity to

accept or reject Torah--to save or destroy the world. That is certainly something to celebrate, and for which to be grateful. Besides, according to tradition, though the Final Redemption will begin in the month of Nissan, around Pesach-time, it will end on Shavuos. And that is certainly something to anticipate with joy.

Gut Yom Tov, Happy Kabbalos HaTorah, and a Great Shabbos, Pinchas Winston Perceptions, Copyright (c) 1999 Rabbi Pinchas Winston and Project Genesis, Inc. Rabbi Winston teaches at both Neve Yerushalym (Jerusalem) - <http://www.torah.org/neve/> and Neveh Tzion (Telzstone) - <http://www.neveh.org/> Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway learn@torah.org 17 Warren Road, Suite 2B <http://www.torah.org/> Baltimore, MD 21208 (410) 602-1350 FAX: 602-1351

From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@virtual.co.il]
 Simcha's Torah Stories Parshas Bamidbar 5759 THE ORGANIZATION MAN Avi, how are you? Great, Chaim. How are you? Fine, thank G-d. I'm on my way to play baseball. Do you want to come? I'd really like to Chaim, but I can't right now. I have to straighten up and reorganize my room. I'm sure that can wait, Avi. The ball game won't take that long. Unfortunately, it can't wait Chaim. My room has been a mess for a long time. It is so hard to find things in the drawers and closets. I waste so much time looking for my belongings. I have to straighten it out once and for all. Once I do that, I'll have much more time for baseball, and everything else. I guess I understand Avi. I just never thought that being organized was that important.

Really? Just take a look at this week's parsha, Chaim. Do you see how much time and effort the Torah takes to explain the way the Jewish people camped and traveled in the desert? What do you mean, Avi? In Parshas Bamidbar you will find a detailed description of the encampment of the Jewish people. Which tribe camped to the north, south, center, etc. The Torah then relates the job description of those Levites who assembled and carried the Tabernacle. Parshas Nasso depicts exactly how they would break camp; who would travel first, and so on until the last tribe to travel. Do you realize how much time and effort are placed into relating these details to us? I never thought about it, Avi. We all know that the Torah does not waste a single word or letter. Therefore, there must be a tremendous significance in all of this information. What it is Avi? Rabbi Aharon Kotler, of blessed memory, the founder of the Lakewood Yeshiva, answers this question. The Torah is teaching us the importance of organization. On a simple level, order saves time. Time is our most precious possession, something which cannot be replaced. When a moment is lost, we can never retrieve it. We can use all of our time productively if we are prepared and organized. Time is also lost looking for objects which are misplaced. So we see, Chaim, that organization and time are intimately related. Wow! But there's even more to it. Rabbi Kotler relates order to holiness. Just think about the mitzvos that we do. Each one has specific instructions that must be performed in a particular sequence. Without that order, the mitzvah is lost. Our prayers are all arranged in a beautiful symphony of psalms and praises to G-d, one flowing into the next. Mitzvos, and the holiness they impart are impossible without seder (order). Now do you see why I must organize my room now, Chaim? I sure do, Avi. You have opened my eyes to a whole new way of thinking. Being organized and prioritized is a lot more important than I ever thought. Now you've got your priorities right Chaim!

Simcha's Quiz Question of the Week If two hours ago it was as long after one o'clock in the afternoon as it was before one o'clock in the morning. What time would it be now? Write Simcha with the correct answer at simchag@netvision.net.il

Written and Compiled by Simcha Groffman Prepared by the Jewish Learning Exchange of Ohr Somayach International 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103 Jerusalem 91180, Israel Tel: 972-2-581-0315 Fax: 972-2-581-2890 E-Mail: info@ohr.org.il Home Page: <http://www.ohr.org.il>

From: office@etzion.org.il[SMTP:office@etzion.org.il] Subject: Dear VBM

Student - Please read this... Dear VBM student, The VBM is a form of SHAREMAIL. That means that although it is free, and will continue to be sent free of charge to anyone who subscribes, it still costs money. The cost of the VBM is shared by the members of the international VBM community. Now, as this semester draws to a close, it is time to think about how to shoulder the responsibility that each of us has to support the program. We are turning to the students to pay a voluntary donation of tuition to help defray the educational costs of the VBM. This is essential not only to pay for this year's courses, but in order to ensure the preparation of new courses for next year. Many people, Rabbanim and educators, have been devoting countless hours to producing these shiurim week after week. If you have been benefiting from them (as I hope you have), I am sure you will want to help share in the costs. All students are being asked to pay \$18 for membership. Unless you are financially unable, we are requesting that you add to that a tuition donation according to the schedule below. Naturally, if you cannot afford these amounts, you can still share in the endeavor with a lesser sum. On the other hand, those of you who understand the importance of the program and can afford it will want to include an additional donation. Donations to the VBM are tax deductible, in accordance with local laws, and may be used to fulfill the obligation of ma'aser kesafim as well. I would like each of you to think of the VBM not as a service, but as a shared endeavor - just as we learn together, we have to ensure it together - that the program can be maintained in the future. By paying our collective dues now, each of us changes from a recipient of mail to a member in an international Torah community. Whatever you can afford, I think it is important to join together in some amount. One final point. Many of you, I know, share VBM Torah with your friends and distribute copies of the shiurim to them. This may be a bit difficult, but I would like to ask you to give them a copy of this letter as well. By letting them join us, you are actually doing them a favor. If you find this difficult, feel free to blame me and say I made you do it. SUGGESTED TUITION DONATIONS MEMBERSHIP (ALL) \$18 TUITION Students \$18 Gainfully employed 1 course \$30 2-3 courses \$60 4-5 courses \$100 6 or more \$150 VBM Supporter - \$270 VBM Patron - \$540 VBM Founder - \$1000 Please make checks payable to: Yeshivat Har Etzion. Payment is welcome in any currency. Addresses: United States The Etzion Foundation 160 Broadway, Suite 1000 New York, NY 10038 Israel Yeshivat Har Etzion Alon Shvut, Gush Etzion Israel, 90433 Thanking you in advance bibirkat haTorah Ezra Bick

From: Mordecai Kornfeld[SMTP:kornfeld@netvision.net.il]
 INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Yerushalayim daf@dafyomi.co.il, <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>
 SUKA 36-56 (End of Maseches) have been dedicated by the wife and daughters of the late Dr. Simcha Bekelnitzky (Simcha Gedalya ben Shraga Feibush) of Queens N.Y. Well known in the community for his Chesed and Tzedakah, he will long be remembered. The Dafyomi Advancement Forum needs your support. Mail a tax-deductible contribution to D.A.F., 140-32 69 Avenue, Flushing NY 11367, USA
 Sukah 44 KEEPING TWO DAYS OF YOM TOV IN ERETZ YISRAEL BECAUSE OF "LO TISGODEDU" QUESTION: The Gemara (43a) explains that the Gezeirah not to hold the Lulav on Shabbos does not apply the first day of Yom Tov, because the first day is accorded special status -- since on the first day the Mitzvah is mid'Oraisa even in the "Gevulin," therefore the Gezeirah does not apply on the first day. All of this applies only in Eretz Yisrael, though. Outside of Eretz Yisrael, where the people are not expert in determining the new month, the Mitzvah of Lulav is not performed on Shabbos, even on the first day of Yom Tov (since it is a Safek whether that day is actually Yom Tov). The Gemara here (44a) concludes that nowadays, even in Eretz Yisrael the Lulav is not held on the first day of Yom Tov when it falls on Shabbos. The reason is that since the people outside of Eretz Yisrael cannot hold the Lulav on that day, the people in Eretz Yisrael also do not hold the Lulav on that day. RASHI explains that

this is because of "Lo Tisgodedu" -- so that there not be different groups of Jews with variant practices. If the Rabanan were concerned that the Jews in Eretz Yisrael and the Jews in Chutz la'Aretz not have different practices -- even though the practice in Chutz la'Aretz differs only because they are not sure which day is Yom Tov -- then why did they not also ordain that the Jews in Eretz Yisrael must observe two days of Yom Tov, just like the Jews in Chutz la'Aretz must observe? (MAHARASHDAM YD #153; LECHEM MISHNAH, Hilchos Lulav 7:17)

ANSWERS: (a) The LECHEM MISHNAH answers that there is a difference between changing the practice in Eretz Yisrael by instituting a passive, "Shev v'Al Ta'aseh" practice and between changing it by instituting an active, "Kum v'Aseh" practice. In order to standardize the practice of Jews the world over, the Rabanan will uproot a practice by instituting a "Shev v'Al Ta'aseh" that the people not take a Lulav in hand on Shabbos in Eretz Yisrael. However, to institute that the people in Eretz Yisrael observe a second day of Yom Tov would involve instituting a positive practice, a "Kum v'Aseh," and the Rabanan do not go that far. (b) Even in Eretz Yisrael, there is a reason not to take the Lulav on the first day when it falls on Shabbos. That reason is the Gezeirah of Rabah (that one might carry it in Reshus ha'Rabim). The only reason that the Gezeirah was not enacted for the first day of Yom Tov in Eretz Yisrael is because of the special status of the first day (that is, it is the only day that is mid'Oraisa everywhere, including the "Gevulin"). However, after the Churban, when many Jews were exiled to Chutz la'Aretz and were no longer taking the Lulav on Shabbos even on the first day of Yom Tov (because they were not expert in determining the date), the factor of "Lo Tisgodedu" *combined* with the Gezeirah (lest one carry in Reshus ha'Rabim) is enough to prohibit taking the Lulav on the first day of Yom Tov even in Eretz Yisrael. When it comes to Yom Tov Sheni, though, there is no rational reason to institute a second day of Yom Tov in Eretz Yisrael other than "Lo Tisgodedu," which, by itself, is not sufficient. (M. Kornfeld)

45b THE "ISPAKLARYA HA'ME'IRAH" QUESTION: Raban Shimon bar Yochai bemoaned the small number of "Bnei Aliyah," people truly dedicated to the service of Hashem who achieve closeness with Him. The Gemara questions his statement from a verse in Yechezkel (48:35) which implies that there are myriads of Bnei Aliyah. The Gemara answers that Raban Shimon bar Yochai was referring only to those who are able to peer through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah" -- those who perceive the Divine with intense clarity. The Gemara then asks that there are still 36 people, as implied in a verse in Yeshayah (30:18), who greet the presence of Hashem every day through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah." The Gemara answers that those are the people "who go up only with permission," while Raban Shimon bar Yochai was referring to those who do not need permission (Rashi). How can the Gemara claim that so many people are able to peer through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah" and get a lucid vision of the Divine? Were we not taught that only Moshe Rabeinu was able to peer through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah," while all over prophets were able to see only through an "Ispaklarya sh'Einah Me'irah," with a clouded vision (Yevamos 49b)! How can the Gemara say that there are 36 people in the world in every generation who see the Divine through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah?" (MAHARSHA)

ANSWERS: (a) The MAHARSHA answers that the Midrash only says that no other prophet *prophesized* with the clarity of the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah." What about Talmidei Chachamim who achieved closeness with Hashem through learning Torah? The Gemara (Bava Basra 12a) says that "Chacham Adif mi'Navi" -- a Torah sage is on a higher level than a prophet. As such, there are Talmidei Chachamim who perceive Hashem with great clarity through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah" as a result of their Torah learning. (b) The IYUN YAKOV, CHIDA in Pesach Einayim and SEFAS EMES answer that our Gemara means that these Tzadikim saw Hashem through the "Ispaklarya ha'Me'irah" *after* their deaths, for "greater is the Tzadik in his death more than in his lifetime" (Chulin 7b). Write to info@dafyomi.co.il, or visit us at <http://www.dafyomi.co.il>

