

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT BAMIDBAR

London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

UNITY IN NUMBERS!

What does a number mean to you?

Technically a number is a mathematical object used to count and measure. Yet we use numbers to represent important times in our lives, to role dice in a game or even play a lucky lottery. This week we enter the fourth book of the Torah Bamidbar. Our Sages know this book as Sefer Hapikudim – the book of Numbers. On first thought we understand the book is so called after the beginning of our Parsha which deals with a population census that is taken of the Jewish people at the time.

Yet when we think of it, why is a whole book named after such a one off event? Wouldn't it have been better for our sages to keep the name as the book of Bamidbar, especially seeing as most of the book deals with occurrences in the wilderness?

Furthermore on inspection the Torah states: "Take a census.....according to their fathers' house, BY NUMBER OF THE NAMES, every male according to their head count." (Bamidbar 1:2).

The expression "Bmispar Sheimot" [by number of the names] seems contradictory. What does it really mean? The term "number" and "names" are almost mutually exclusive. When we talk about numbers we imply anonymity. The word "names" has the exact opposite connotation. A name gives a person singularity and a quality of being special

- more than just a number!

Which is it - was the census concerned with the overall numbers (the "Klal") or was the census interested in the individual names (the "P'rat")?

Have you ever been in a synagogue searching for a Minyan? When people arrive in the synagogue the Shliach Tsibur has to wait till there are ten men. The Halacha is that he may not count these people directly.

Rav Mordechai Gifter zt'l, explains that numbers by their very definition are finite. Stating a number, one quantifies an item such that the quantity is no more and no less than the number stated. A human being, by his very definition, is not finite in this sense. He has a soul and strengths, and characteristics. He has unlimited potential to grow and expand his capabilities. Trying to put a number on an individual limits him and restricts his ability to reach untold heights. Therefore, when we speak of a "Minyan" we are not speaking of a "mispar" [a number]. We cannot just "count" Jews. When we enumerate people and treat them as numbers we in effect say they are defined and limited. This is certainly not the way Hashem wants us to view the Jewish people.

Thus when there is a census of the people, the aim is to work out the number, but they are not counted by numbers, rather they are counted through names. Each name represents an individuality, an unlocked potential – each person has a separate task in life. The end number is the sum of all the

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2ND SIVAN 5784
SHABBAT BEGINS:
20:56pm
SHABBAT ENDS:
22:28pm

Join our weekly TAL Mincha services on Friday and Shabbat Minyan.

- Mincha followed by Kabbalat Shabbat: 7pm
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- Mincha: 8pm. *Followed by BIG lads Kumsitz Seuda Shelishit and Arvit*

DVAR TORAH
Unity in Numbers!
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

DVAR TORAH
Parshat Bamidbar
By Rabbi David Baadani

DVAR TORAH
Our Individual Mission
By Rabbi Yehonatan Salem

HALACHOT
By Rabbi Eli Mansour

KIDS ZONE
Quiz & Comic

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physical bodies, but it in no way measures the awesome infinite power of all their souls.

Getting the Jewish people to unite nowadays isn't easy.

But lets think about it 3323 years ago, when the Jews left Egypt. How easy was it for them to unite?

The Midrash states that when the time was right to leave Egypt Hashem gathered the Jews from all over Egypt. They all set out and followed Moshe into the wilderness. Imagine, a people that had been scattered across a vast land, there were no technological communications, and yet they all went following one leader into the wilderness.

Forty nine days later they stood at Har Sinai – and they encamped united - Kelsh Echad Belev Echad. Millions of people, a whole nation, and within 49 days they had achieved unity!

What is the secret to this unity?

Chazal explain that Moshe had already told them that the whole purpose of Yetsiat Mitsrayim was Taavdun...Al Hahar Hazeh – receiving the Torah. The people had

a goal, they were excited and had a goal to work towards. They united behind this goal, and worked on themselves for 49 days each day improving their characters and unity, until they were able to completely unite to receive the Torah.

The Torah could only be received by a united people!

Similarly we find in this weeks Parsha. Moshe was worried. Each tribe had a different flag, each tribe had a different Avoda (work) set out for them. How would they all be able to integrate? Perhaps some of the tribes would complain about their flag and tasks?

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky explained that Hashem reassured Moshe, and told him so long as they are encamped around the Mishkan all will work well. So long as we are unified in our ideology, we understand the important things in life and set these as the centre of our attention – the Holy Presence of Hashem – then we will be successful.

The Netsiv explains that book of Numbers, is so called, because it

begins with a census and ends with a census. The census at the beginning refers to a census shortly after leaving Egypt. A nation that had received the Torah, built the Mishkan and was ready to start their voyage. It was a show of how we value each Jew individually, yet at the same time, how we value the whole nation as a united entity. It is only through unity that we can have the Mishkan and Hashem's presence within us. The census at the end refers, a generation later, to a newborn nation, about to enter Israel. The message being sent to them is clear. To inherit the land of Israel, there must be unity. A count of the people is taken, each exists on their individual level, yet each must know the centre piece must be Holiness.

Am Yisrael are a successful nation when we are united.

Let us focus on our heritage, focus on our individual goals and unite in His service to merit the coming of Mashiach Bimhera Byamenu Amen.

Shabbat Shalom



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT BAMIDBAR

A few days before Chag HaShavuot We look back at the past 50 days in which we should have prepared ourselves in honour of this special day. We see our ups and downs and we might feel unprepared and inadequate to receive the Torah. Let's face it, not all of these days were fully utilized to elevate our mind and soul. So, what do we have to do in honour of this special day? How can I receive

the Torah if I didn't prepare myself enough for it?

If you feel inadequate you should remind yourself the first time the Jewish people counted the Omer, the first time they were preparing to receive the Torah.

It was only three days after G-d split the red sea and they already complained about the lack of water. Then on the 17th of Iyar they complained about the lack of food and then later on they complained again and wished to go back to Egypt.

Even the generation that lived

through מתן תורה, were imperfect, and despite our imperfections, despite our ups and downs, and pros and cons, G-d chose to take us as His people, to love us unconditionally and to give us his precious Torah.

May we all merit to feel this tremendous love Hashem has towards us and reflect it onto our family, spouses, children, friends and all of עם ישראל. And with this עם ישראל we will be זוכה for the ultimate redemption speedily in our days, Amen



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

OUR INDIVIDUAL MISSION

This week, as we start the book of Bamidbar, the Torah begins by enumerating the Jewish People who were in the Sinai desert. This is to symbolize that every Jew, without exception, has a unique and intrinsic value, and is not just a number or a stereotype. His importance is such that for him alone the entire Creation is justified. At the time of Creation, G-d made many of each species, but of man He only created one, from whom the whole world was to be populated. This demonstrated the uniqueness of each person, and for this reason our Sages taught us the importance of sustaining and saving any individual person.

What is it that makes each and every one of us so important that our individual existence justifies the Creation?

Before the world was created, G-d had created myriads of souls in His "store house", which were basking in His divine presence. Yet, for these souls to derive such enjoyment without having

first earned it, causes them much embarrassment. Hence, G-d created this physical world and enabled souls to descend into it, encased in a body of flesh, to be given the chance to earn their reward by choosing to do His will, i.e. the mitzvot of the Torah. By exerting effort in their adherence to the mitzvot, they earn eternal reward which they will receive when their souls become detached from their earthly bodies and return to their maker.

However, since each soul is unique in its spiritual characteristics, each one has a specific goal and mission, which it must fulfil in order to attain its perfection. Accordingly, each person is created with a different combination of physical characteristics, strengths and attributes, to enable him to fulfil his given spiritual mission for which he has descended to this world. Additionally, every person has a different, tailor-made route through which he must pass during his earthly stay, in order for him to reach his own perfection. For this reason, everyone has different trials and tribulations, "ups and downs" that he must overcome. We all have moments in our

lives when we feel content, happy, relaxed or calm. On the other hand, there are moments when we feel overwhelmed, challenged, sad or empty.

We should try to understand our individual duty in this world, to define our goal clearly and not to lose sight of it. By doing so, we will be able to channel even our most challenging moments into being part of a purposeful and fulfilling existence, as we steer away from wrongdoing and remain on our defined paths.

The underlying message of the book of Bamidbar is that life has its challenges and its "ups and downs", as we journey through our phase of life in this world. Recently, my grandmother described the events of her childhood to me. She was orphaned at a very young age from both her parents, witnessed "Kristallnacht," and escaped with her life from the hands of the Nazis. Today she derives much pride from all her offspring.

Let us keep our heads "above water" and remember that all that we are going through is for our ultimate good, to gain our earned reward in the world to come.

Shabbat shalom and Chag Sameach



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

Touching Food Before Washing One's Hands in the Morning

Maran writes in Shulhan Aruch (Orah Haim 4) that one must ensure not to touch a vat of beer in the morning before washing Netilat Yadayim, as doing so could cause one to lose the beer. The Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan, 1839-1933) explains that since there is Tum'a (impurity) on one's hands when he wakes up in the morning, touching food can cause it to become Tameh, which can have detrimental effects. One must therefore avoid touching food before washing his hands in the morning.

The Halachic authorities write that if one did touch food before washing his hands in the morning, he should put it under water three times, and then it may be eaten. This applies even to vegetables

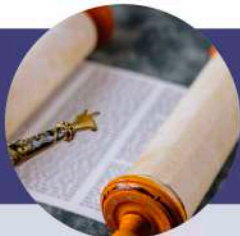
that one normally peels, like cucumbers. Despite the fact that one touched only the peel, which in any event will be removed, the vegetable must be rinsed three times before it is eaten.

Some writers raised the question of why this method of eliminating Tum'a does not work in the case of garlic that was left without its peel overnight. The garlic in this case should not be eaten, as it contracts Tum'a overnight, and the Poskim do not offer the solution of rinsing the garlic the three times. The work Arsit Haim explains that one cannot compare different forms of Tum'a and evil spirits. A method that is effective for eliminating one kind of Tum'a is not necessarily effective with regard to a different kind, and thus although a food that has been touched before Netilat

Yadayim may be rinsed and eaten, this solution cannot be used in the case of garlic that had been left overnight without its peel.

The Mishna Berura writes that one should also refrain from smelling tobacco snuff before washing Netilat Yadayim in the morning, for two reasons: 1) he causes the snuff to become Tameh by touching it; 2) smelling snuff involves touching the nostril, and it is forbidden to touch the openings of one's body before washing Netilat Yadayim.

Summary: One should ensure not to touch any food or drink before washing his hands in the morning. If he did touch food before washing his hands, he should wash it three times and it may then be eaten.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Bamidbar

The Book of Bamidbar – "In the desert" – begins with Hashem commanding Moshe to take a census of all men over age twenty – old enough for service. The count reveals just over 600,000. The levi'im are counted separately later on because their service will be unique. They will be responsible for transporting the Mishkan and its furnishings, and assembling them when the nation encamps. The 12 Tribes of Israel, each with its banner, are arranged around the Mishkan in four sections: east, south, west and north. Since Levi is singled out,

the tribe of Yosef is split into two tribes, Efraim and Menashe, so there will be four groups of three. When the nation travels, they march in a formation similar to the way they camp.

A formal transfer is made between the first-born and the levi'im, whereby the levi'im take over the role the first-born would have had serving in the Mishkan if not for the sin of the golden calf. The transfer is made using all the 22,000 surveyed levi'im from one month old and up. Only levi'im between 30 and 50 will work in the Mishkan. The remaining

first-born sons are redeemed with silver, similar to the way we redeem our first-born today. The sons of Levi are divided into the three main families of Gershon, Kehat and Merari (besides the kohanim – the special division from Kehat's family). The family of Kehat carried the Menorah, the Table, the Altar and the Holy Ark. Because of their utmost sanctity, the Ark and the Altar are covered only by Aharon and his sons, before the levi'im prepare them for travel.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com

KIDS ZONE QUIZ TIME!

- 1 Why were the Jewish People counted so frequently?
1:1 - They are very dear to Hashem.
- 2 What documents did the people bring when they were counted?
1:18 - They brought birth records proving their tribal lineage.

- 3 What determined the color of the tribal flags?
2:2 - Each tribe's flag was the color of that tribe's stone in the breastplate of the kohen gadol.
- 4 What is the difference between an "ot" and a "degel"??
2:2 - An "ot" is a flag, i.e., a colored cloth that hangs from a flagpole. A degel is a flagpole.
- 5 How do we see that the Jews in the time of Moshe observed "techum Shabbat" -- the prohibition against traveling more than 2000 amot on Shabbat?
2:2 - Hashem commanded them to camp no more than 2000 amot from the Ohel Mo'ed. Had they camped farther, it would have been forbidden for them to go to the Ohel Mo'ed on Shabbat.



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5-A-SIDE

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