



# OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI  
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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## ***Thoughts on Parashat BAMIDBAR Year 23 by Dayan Abraham David***

In this week's Sidra, it begins with a count for the encampment of the Tribes around the Mishkan under the banners of each Tribe. What we notice here for the count is that it only mentions Legulgelotam a head count and nothing about being counted with the half shekalim as in Ki Tissa. Rashi connects the count with Ki Tissa because of the word gulgelutam used in both to request a count with Shekalim here as well. But the other Mefarshim explain in fact the count was a direct head count. There seems to be another indication to this from the fact that the pasuk also mentions shemot kol zachar that they were counted according to their names which is not mentioned in Ki Tissa, for if it was through Shekalim, it would be an indirect count without names. Hence, it would seem that it was a direct count with names of individuals. So how come there was no fear of their being plagued, as it says in Ki Tissa, ki natnu ish kofer nafsho, ke lo yehe bahem negef bifikod otam, they should give redemption so they should not

be plagued when counted? We could answer, here the counting was necessary for their encampment around the Mishkan Haedut, the Tabernacle which would manifest the Shechinah of Hashem as it had been when the Torah was given at Sinai. The Shechinah would hover over the Aron HaKodesh in the Mishkan to communicate with the Bnei Yisrael through Moshe as at Sinai. There needed to be at least 616,000 Jewish men present  $4 \times 7 \times 22000 = 616,000$  present for the Shechinah to be amongst them as the number of Malachim who accompanied Hashem on Sinai, in 4 directions and 7 levels of 22000. There Hashem would communicate through the Torah represented by the Aron to every individual Jewish soul, that is why it mentions according to their names shemot, and since they would be united around the Torah as one, there was no fear of a plague. For the Shechinah would be there to protect each one through his connection to the Torah which would connect them to Hashem. Even though we do not have a Temple or Mishkan now, Hashem connects with us through the Torah we study. As it says in Pirkei Avot, shnayim yoshvim ve

oskin baTorah, Shechina Sheruya benehem, veafilu echad .....

On a deeper level, we find that when we study the Torah and seek to understand the true interpretation, Hashem actually follows our words and credits us with its interpretation. The Gemara in Gittin (6:2) says that Rebe Aviyatar could be relied upon for the Halacha because

G-d had agreed with his interpretation. Rebe Aviyatar and Rebe Yonatan argued about the interpretation of the pasuk in Nach;

in Judges (Shoftim) Ve Tiznah Alav Pelagsho. There was a man who became very angry with his Pelegesh (common law wife) who in her fear ran away to her father's home; things went very wrong on their way back when a great evil was done to her, a war ensued between the tribe of Benyamin and the other Tribes when 70,000 Jews were killed all because of his excessive anger.

The two Rabbis queried on the cause of the anger. Rebe Aviyatar interpreted the word Tiznah, to do with food that she was careless and he found a fly in his food. Rebe Yonatan interpreted the word Tiznah as to do with his intimate relationship with his wife where she was careless and could have caused him harm. Rebe Aviyatar met Eliyahu Hanabi and asked him what is G-d doing now? he answered, He is studying the subject of what happened with the pelegesh in givah, and what does he say about it queried Rebe Aviyatar? He says My son Aviyatar says that this was the cause and My son Yonatan says

that was the cause. Rebe Aviyatar wondered is there a doubt before G-d what actually happened that he quotes our two opinions. Eliyahu Hanabi answered, both of you are correct; both things happened. He found a fly in his food and he let it pass but when he found the hair in his relationship he became very angry, Elu ve Elu Divrei Elokim Chaim. Both are correct and each one understands it according to his makeup and feelings and for him that is Torat Elokim for G-d has given him to understand it as a reward for his efforts to seek the truth in Torah. The words of Torah we study connect us to

G-d and he listens to our effort and understanding, when we get it correct and reveal a new understanding in the Torah, He quotes it in our name and that will be forever. The Torah has been given to us to understand each person in his own way according to his particular makeup and as long as he has researched all the necessary facts and seeks the truth, his revelations will be inscribed in his name. Ours is a living Torah, the words of Hashem given to Am Yisrael to reveal in this world. Of course, to establish the Halachah there are other rules like acharei Rabbim lahatot. Let us on this Shavuot accept our portion of Torah for the year and work to reveal it.

### **TORAH GEMS**

The Bnei Yisrael accepted the Torah with the words '*Na'ase veNishma*', we will do and we will listen, a complete and unreserved acceptance for which

they were given two crowns: one for Na'ase and one for Nishma.

Yet we find in the Talmud in Shabbat which explains the Pasuk 'VeYityatzvu beTachtit haHar', they stood under the mountain, that G-d lifted the mountain above them and forced them to accept the Torah.

The Midrash Tanchuma in Parshat Noah explains that the Children of Israel willingly accepted the written Law as we have it in the Sefer Torah but it was the Torah SheBa'al Peh – the Oral Law handed down to Moshe Rabbenu that they had to be forced to accept. The Oral Law gives us the true explanations of the pasukim and teaches how to derive the halachot and deeper messages of the Torah. The Torah SheBa'al Peh is as vast as the seas ('Rahava min haYam') and deeper, it needed an awesome commitment for its study – it had to be handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth and not written down. The Sages had to get together and pool their knowledge and Kabbalah they received from their teachers editing and clarifying each and every saying until a clear halacha was processed. It required the whole being of the person and complete mental commitment, it was not a book to be read at leisure in which a book-mark could be put till the next reading. There was an awesome responsibility to establish the halacha correctly to be followed by all the nation, some halachot being derived through single letters and even from Tagim. The intricate study of the Kabbalah which correlates this world to the spiritual world needed great Kedushah and dedication. With this we can understand a little why the Bnei Yisrael hesitated and why they had to be forced. The Written Torah without the Oral Law is like a body without a Neshama. It is the Oral Law which has distinguished our people from the nations. Through it we see how differently we understand the Written

Torah compared to those who have taken only from its literal meaning. It is this Torah Ba'al Peh which is studied by great and small, old and young, the Talmud Berachot, Yoma, Kidushin and Baba Kama which has engrossed and protected us from alien influences, the Midrashim which have conditioned our behaviour and the Kabbalah with its power that has made us a great nation of spiritual giants.

### **STORIES OF TZADDIKIM**

A yeshiva student once asked the Steipler, Rabbi Yacov Yisrael Karnefsky, if he should cease learning with a 'chavrusa', study partner, who had a poor grasp of the material in favour of a far brighter partner.

The Steipler replied: "If you will perform a 'chesed', kindness with one partner, then Hashem will repay you in your studies with a second partner, so that your own grasp of the subject material will be quicker than expected. It is not worth it for you to drop your present partner.

**Shabbat Shalom**

### **HALACHOT**

1. It is most important to stay up and be 'Osek' in the Torah on Shavuot night and if one does without interrupting with idle chatter, he can atone for a punishment of 'karet'.
2. If someone has not slept all night, even though he can make the 'Berachot HaShachar' after midnight he can only make 'Berachot HaTorah' after dawn. He does not make the Beracha 'Al Netilat Yadayim' when he washes in the morning.
3. If someone did sleep at night, even though he wakes up before dawn, he can make 'Berachot HaTorah' then.

4. The accepted minhag is to eat milky food on the first day of Shavuot. Many reasons are given for this custom. We have the custom to eat kahi, a pastry which is made with butter and 'halek date juice to fulfil the pasuk referring to the Torah 'Chalav Vudevash tachat leshonech', milk and honey on your tongue, depicting the sweetness of the Torah.

5. Even though we eat a meal of milky food we should at least eat a meaty meal in honour of Yom Tov.

6. One should take care of the laws of milk and meat as one would normally. If you wish to eat meat after milk or light cheese.

a. clean the table or change the tablecloth as you normally do.

b. rinse your mouth and eat some bread.

c. clean your hands of any residue.

d. make either berchat hamazon or the after beracha as applicable.

Before eating meat after milk or cheese, it is advisable to wait an hour but after very mature cheese, one needs to wait six hours. The Ben Ish Hai used to wait an hour for each month the cheese took to mature.

7. But for milk after meat or chicken, even for food cooked with meat one should wait six hours, change the tablecloth and make a 'Beracha acharona'. If one finds meat or chicken between his teeth after the six hours one should just remove it, cleans one's mouth before drinking milk. There is no need to wait again.

8. One must not bake bread with milk or meat fat unless it looks different from normal bread and is recognisable for what it contains. If it is not different the bread becomes assur even to eat with milk, if it contains milk or visa versa.

**Minis & Maxis childrens' services  
from ages 3-11 at 10.45am in  
school library & classroom**

**Mazal tov to  
Isaac & Regina Nissim  
Albert & Michelle Corin  
Josh & Natalie Canter  
and families  
on the birth of their baby boy.**

*If you wish to sponsor a Kiddush  
Please contact  
Monty Sassoon 07787 571313  
For Seuda Shlishit  
or to rent the  
Nancy Reuben Hall  
for a Simcha  
Please contact  
Yanky David 07725 408724*

**We have a regular Youth  
Minyan organised by Jason  
Ibrahim and Jordan Moses  
followed by a kiddush**

### **SHABBAT TIMES**

Shabbat commences	8:35 pm
Shabbat terminates and 1st day Yom Tov commences Saturday	9:58 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat for the summer	7:30 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit	7:30 pm
Arbit	9:30pm
Shabbat terminates	9:58pm
KIDDUSH NOT BEFORE THIS, HAVDALAH IN KIDDUSH Hatima	12:00 am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Mincha followed by Arbit	
Arbit for the summer	7:30 pm