



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on BEHA'ALOTECHEA Year 25 by Dayan Abraham David

When the Aron, the holy Ark journeyed, "Vayhe binsoah haaron", the Talmud in Shabbat (116:1) asks that these pasukim about the Holy Ark (Aron) journeying before them to show them the way is really out of place here and should be with the encampment and journey of the tribes with their flags. The Talmud answers it was placed here to make a break between two sins (as the Ramban explains poraniyot to mean sins not punishments) the first as Rabbi Hama bar Chanina says "she saru acharei Hashem" they went away from going after Hashem and Tosafot there explains from the midrash "They ran away from Har Sinai as a child runs away from school; since they learned much Torah during their encampment at Sinai they wanted to run away so they should not be given more mitzvoth there (Ramban). The second sin was the grumbling they made "mitonennim lefnei Hashem". The Ramban explains that it should not be 3 sins in a row, which would become a (Hazakah), entrenched for there was also the sin of complaining and asking for meat. Three in a row, running away from Har Sinai the second "mitonennim" complaining about the speed of their journey to Israel (they became worried and afraid about

going into Eretz Yisrael) and the third the lust for meat "Hitavu Taavah". So this parasha of "Vayhe Binsoah Haaron" was put in to separate subjects so they should not become a hazakah (entrenched and expedited to continue as three actions normally do). But we have a difficulty if these 3 episodes happened one after the other there was a "hazakah" in fact. So what difference does it make how it is written in the Torah, that the Parasha "Vayehe binsoah haaron" is inserted to make a break? Maybe if it is not written in the Torah it will not be fixed as a fact for the future for only what is written in the Torah is for now and forever and would be a stain on the Bnei Yisrael forever, so because the events are separated in the Torah it breaks up the "hazakah" of their being habitual sinners. We could give another answer which would also answer why these pasukim were used and not others to make the interjections. The Midrash that says they turned away from Hashem, when they left Sinai, ketenook haboreyach mi Bet Hasefer" like a child running away from school. This was not really a sin in deed only in thought, for they did not physically leave Sinai before they followed the cloud and the Aron which moved on Hashem's instructions, they followed Hashem and the Aron and did not move before. But in their minds and thoughts they were happy to get away like a child who is happy to leave school when the bell rings. Theirs was a sin only in

“machshavah” not in a “maase” and the pasukim of “Vayhe Binsoah HaAron” indicates this that they followed the Aron and instructions given through Moshe Rabbenu and the blowing of the “chatzotzarot” as in all their journeys. So this sin does not connect to the two others “mitonnenim” and “hitavu taavah” for meat which was with words of complaints and grumblings considered as deeds. And since the first was only in thought and not deed it did not make a “hazakah” for them to be considered habitual sinners. These interjecting pasukim indicated the reason for this as they only journeyed to the command of Hashem.

GEMS

‘Ve asafsuf asher bekirbo hitavu tavah vayashuvu vayiviku gam Bnei Yisrael’.

When the mixed multitude stirred up a longing for meat, the Bnei Yisrael followed too and they all began to cry, even the families, *‘Vayishmah Moshe et ha-am boiche lemishpechotav’*, This ta’ava stirred up other urges about relationships they were forbidden. Moshe felt weakened and unable to carry their burden alone. For they had cried for no good reason only following the mixed multitude. So he asked Hashem for help and Hashem told him to gather seventy Elders he recognised as their leaders: *‘asher yadata ki hem zekenei ha-am veshotrav’*. Who were these Elders Moshe recognised? They were the ones appointed taskmasters over their brethren to oversee the work. They took upon themselves the punishment and whipping of the Egyptians when the Bnei Yisrael did not complete the requirements of the bricks. They did not pass the

punishment onto the workers for they had mercy on them. They were now given the leadership they truly deserved for their *‘meserat nefesh’*, for their brethren. They received honour and also *‘Ruach Hakodesh’* through Moshe as the Pasuk says: *‘VeEzalti min haruach asher alecha.....veSamti alehem’*. Eldad and Medad were also from these leaders who took punishment for the people but they did not turn up to take the honour, feeling they were not worthy. For their *‘anavah’*, they were given an added credit, *‘nebuah’*, prophecy, directly from Hashem as the Midrash tells us and not through Moshe, as the others and they even had the credit to enter the Land when all the others perished in the Midbar. However we find in the Parasha another group who were rewarded, the *‘Leviyim’*. *‘Vehevdelta et haleveyim metoch Bnei Yisrael ve hayu li haleveyim’*, separate the Levites from Bnei Yisrael and they will be mine. They were to serve in the Temple in place of the *‘bechorim’*, the first born, who had sinned with the golden calf. The Levites were chosen because they gave of themselves to the service of Hashem, as the Sforno reminds us: *‘netunim netunim hema al she natnu et etzmam la avodati’*, ‘for they gave of themselves for My service’. When Moshe was descending from Mount Sinai with the *‘Luchot Haberit’* he found the Bnei Yisrael involved with the golden calf he cried for help: *‘Mi laHashem Elai’*, who is for G-d come to me, and only the Levites came forward and risked their lives for G-d and His service and this saved the Bnei Yisrael spiritually and from annihilation. Here we find they were given a greater reward than

that received by the Zekenim who suffered to save their people from the affliction of the Egyptians. They were rewarded themselves but the Levites received reward for their generations as well. Here again we see that the *'mesirat nefesh'*, the sacrifice one makes for G-d and the Torah as the Levites did, receive a much greater reward. Belief and faith in Hashem and the Torah which is spiritual, deserves a reward for continuation for generations. Torah is now and forever; whereas the physical salvation of our brethren, most commendable and definitely a great Mitzvah will receive the ultimate reward of *'Olam Habah'* and also reward in this world, but it will be limited to the person himself. The Sforno continues that it specially mentions *'Mitoch Bnei Yisrael'*, that the Levites would represent the Jewish people in their service by being supported by the Bnei Yisrael with their giving of the *'maaser rishon'*, tithes of their produce. The Rambam, at the end of Halachot Shmitta, takes this further. Why did the Levites not inherit a portion like the other Tribes? They were set aside to serve G-d and teach His laws to the people, they did not serve in the army or physically work the land etc., because they were the army of G-d and this would merit them their portion. He continues: 'And it is not only the Tribe of Levy, but any person in the world who dedicates his life to the service of Hashem and gives up the material aspirations of the world to stand for the service of G-d, he will become sanctified *'Kodesh Kodashim'*, forever and will deserve a portion like the Levites and Cohanim. The words of the Rambam are

pertinent today as they were in his time.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

The coming Wednesday, the 25th of Sivan is the *yahrzeit* of the holy Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu z"l, and it's fitting to mention this story about him.

A nurse from the Shaare Zedek Hospital said this wonderful story. She was on her way to the Hospital when she stopped by Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu's Synagogue and Kollel, a few days before Pesach to drop off some *'Geniza'*, Holy articles of Shemos. This was in the year the Rabbi passed away. The Rabbi was already in the Shaare Zedek Hospital, quite ill. When the Rabbi's driver, Asaf, who knew her, told her he had just distributed chickens to the *'Avreichim'* as was the practice of the Rabbi to help them for Pesach and had a box of them left over. "Please take them and give them to whomever, you want!" She told him, "I am on my way now to the Hospital and have no time for this"; but as he persisted, I told him to put it in the car and I drove off. It then occurred to me that I knew a poor family who might need it and drove there and gave over the chickens for the festival to the *'Baalal Habayit'*. Six months later, after *'Som Gedalia'* this lady came to my home to thank me for the chickens I had dropped off before Pesach. This is what she told me: "Just before you came to me I sat crying, I had cleaned my house of all the Chametz but the

house was empty and I had no food for the Hag for my children. I was crying for usually Rabbi Eliyahu would send me some money for my Pesach needs and now that he is ill in hospital there is no one to worry about me". She repeated: "Yes, every Hag he would send one of his students with an envelope with money". I was astounded at the turn of events. I had together with Asaf, been the Sheliah of Rabbi Eliyahu, to bring this needy person the help he usually gave her". *'Ratzon yereav ye ase'*, G-d fulfils the wishes of those who fear Him.

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Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

1) A person is obliged to make at least 100 berachot everyday as indicated in the Torah and by King David in Tehillim so that a person should come to love and fear G-d. These 100 berachot protect us from the 98 plus 2 kellalot written in the Mishne Torah as explained by our Rabbis.

2) We usually make this up with the berachot of the Amida and other prayers that we say during the weekday and of course the berachot that we make when we eat and drink. On Shabbat when we have only 7 berachot of Amida instead of 19, we need to make this number

up. We should make it up by having extra food and drink on Shabbat. However, we must be careful not to make berachot unnecessarily.

3) Some poskim say that listening and answering Amen to the Berchat HaTorah and Haftara etc. can be counted towards the required berachot. But one must be most careful to hear the beracha from beginning to end.

4) The person who makes the Beracha should hear the words he pronounces. They should be said with thought and concentration, without missing out or swallowing words.

5) With this pandemic when we are unable to make minyanim in the synagogue we do not have the chazara of the Amidah to add to this number so we should make it up with other brachot like food and besamim.

*On Wednesday 17th June at 8:30pm,
Dayan David will be speaking on zoom
which will include some stories about
the tzaddik
Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu z"l*

Shabbat commences 9:03 pm

**We should not light candles before
7:35 pm**

Shabbat terminates 10:34 pm

Shabbat :Latest Shema

Magen Avraham 8:15 am

Shabbat Latest Shema Gra 8:51 am

**PLEASE FOLLOW ALL THE
GUIDELINES AND WARNINGS
CONCERNING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**
**VUSHMARTEM MEOD
LE'NAFSHOTECHEM**

VEHAVTA L'REACHA KAMOCHA