



Ohr Yerushalayim News

שבועות תשע"ח - במדבר - 19th May 2018 - Volume 10 - Issue 42

News This Week

מזל טוב

To Mr & Mrs Michael Freedman on the birth of a grandson to Mr & Mrs Avi Blachman. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 13 East Meade

JRRC Appeal

We once again welcome Alex Strom who will speak Friday night for the annual JRRC appeal. donations can be given to Chizky Salomon.

Tikkun Leil

There will be a Tikun Leil on first night Yom Tov where people can learn b'Chavrusa in the hall (in conjunction with Manchester Mesivta) or Shiur rooms or attend the Shiurim in the main Shul. details on the back page.

Annual Siyum Mishnayos

Make sure you have learnt your mishnayos in time for the Siyum which will take place at the Oneg Yom tov on 2nd day Yom Tov.

Oneg Yom Tov

All members are invited to the Oneg Yom Tov which will take place on second day yom tov after Mincha, details on back page

GDPR

All members should have received an email requiring them to opt-in for future correspondence about Davening Times, Shiurim and Shul Events. It is imperative that you respond to the email if you wish to continue receiving this information whether via email or in the post. If you have not yet responded or did not receive the email, please email us at office@ohryerushalayim.org.uk to confirm if you wish to opt-in., Additionally a separate email will be sent to those on the newsletter email list requiring confirmation that you wish to continue to receive the newsletter via email. This email also requires a response to 'opt-in'

A Cut Amongst the Rest

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)

This week's portion begins Sefer Bamidbar, telling the story of the major events that occurred during the forty year trek through the Midbar towards the land of Israel. In secular terms the book is called Numbers, probably because of the first command in this third Book of the Pentateuch, "count the Jewish people," thus the name Numbers.

The Hebrew words for count are either s'ooch, which also means lift up, and p'kod, which can also mean appoint. Thus, when the Torah commands, "s'ooch es rosh kol adas Yisrael, count the heads all the assembly of Israel (Numbers 1:2), it is telling Moshe to uplift them as well.

It was not merely a matter of numbers, explains Rebbe Rav Shmuel of Sochatchov: counting the nation was not only a means of enumerating them, but also of appointing a special dignity to each and every one who was counted. Every individual was important, there were no communal estimates, and the appointment actually lifted them.

But one of the tribes was not counted with the rest. Regarding the tribe of Levi, which was designated as the spiritual leader of the Jewish people, Moshe was told, "But you shall not count (p'kod) the tribe of Levi; and their heads you shall not lift (v'es rosham lo sisah) among the Children of Israel" (Numbers 1:49).

לעלו נשמת דוב יצחק ב"ר אפרים אלחנן ז"ל

הלל

Whenever הלל is recited, on ראש חודש or יום טוב it must be said whilst standing, without supporting oneself on anything.

Our מנהג is to say a ברכה at the beginning and conclusion whether "whole" or "half" הלל is recited.

Every word should be enunciated clearly and correctly. Interruption of any sort should be avoided and if joining the שליח צבור in singing care must be taken not to repeat any words or phrases apart from the פסוקים from "אודר" to the end of הלל as indicated in the Siddur.

Ideally one should understand the meaning of this beautiful praise to הקב"ה.

The questions are simple. Why is there a double expression prohibiting a count "do not count and do not lift their heads"? In addition, why does the Torah add the words, "amongst the children of Israel"? True, they were counted separately, and so the Torah should rather state, "And the tribe of Levi shall be enumerated separately." Can there be a deeper intonation with the expression, "Do not lift their head amongst

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת במדבר

Mincha	7.20pm
Candle Lighting	7.28pm - 7.45pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.04am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	8.50pm
Seder Limmud & Shiur	Following

ליל א שבועות

Maariv	10.16pm
Candle Lighting	Not before 10.16pm
Tikkun Leil	1.00am

יום א שבועות

1st Shacharis	3.23am
2nd Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha followed by a Shiur by Rabbi Binyomin Sulzbacher	8.50pm
Maariv	10.00pm
Candle Lighting	Not before 10.18pm

יום ב שבועות

Shacharis	9.00am
Mincha followed by Oneg Yom Tov / Siyum Mishnayos	8.50pm
Maariv & Motzei Yom Tov	10.20pm
Shacharis Tues אסרו חג	6.40am / 7.15am / 7.55am
Shacharis Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Shacharis Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.20pm

the Children of Israel”?

Rav Eliyahu Chaim Meisels, the Rav of Lodz, would raise money for the poor widows and orphans of his city. During one particularly freezing winter, he went to visit one of the prominent members of his community, Reb Isaac, a banker who served as the president of the community council.

Bundled in a coat and scarf, the Rabbi approached the banker's mansion and knocked on the door.

The valet who answered the door was shocked to see the great Rabbi Meisels standing outside in the bitter cold. He immediately asked him to enter the home where he said there would be a hot tea waiting.

Rabbi Meisels refused. “It is not necessary. Please tell Reb Isaac to see me by the door.”

The banker heard that the Rav was waiting near the portal and rushed in his evening jacket to greet him. Upon seeing the Rabbi standing in the frigid weather, he exclaimed. “Rebbe, please step inside. I have the fireplace raging, and my butler will prepare a hot tea for you! There is no need for you to wait outside!”

“That’s alright,” countered Reb Eliyahu Chaim. “It won’t be long, and all I need could be accomplished by talking right here. I’m sure you won’t mind. Anyway, why should I dirty your home with my snow-covered boots?”

By this time, Reb Isaac was in a dilemma. The frigid air was blowing into his house. He did not want to close the door and talk outside in the cold, and yet the Rabbi did not want to enter!

“Please, Rabbi, I don’t know about you, but I am freezing,” cried the banker. “I don’t mind if your boots are wet! Just come on in!”

But the Rabbi did not budge. He began talking about the plight of some of the unfortunate members of the community as the banker's teeth chattered in response.

“Please, Rebbe, just tell me what you need! I’ll give anything you want, just come inside!”

With that, Reb Elya Chaim relented. He entered the man’s home and followed him to the den, where a blazing fire heated the room. Then he began: “I need firewood for 50 families this winter.” The banker smiled. “No problem, I commit to supplying the wood. Just one question. You know I give tzedoka, so why did you make me stand outside?”

“Reb Isaac,” smiled Reb Eliyahu Chaim. “I know you give, but I wanted to make sure you understood what these poor people are going through. I knew that five minutes in the freezing cold would give you a different perspective than my initial asking while basking in the warmth of your fireplace.”

The Chasam Sofer explains that because Levi was a special tribe of teachers and leaders it could be possible they would be aloof. Thus, though they were counted separately, they could not be above the crowd. Therefore, the Torah’s command was stated in clear terms, “their heads you shall not lift (V’es rosham lo sisah) among the Children of Israel”. Leadership may put you in a class by yourself, but remember, says the Torah, you must not feel that you are above the folk. You cannot bask in warmth while you are oblivious to those who suffer in the cold. Your head can not be “lifted” from among the children of Israel.

Achieving “Nishma”

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert . . . (Bamidbar 1:1)

“We will do, and we will understand.” The Talmud calls this the language of angels. The Tzadukim called us impetuous for saying it. In truth, who wouldn’t have put “we will do” before “we will understand” if they heard G-d speak over a mountain that was covered with an ominous cloud and shofars getting louder with time? Most people would have just said, “We will do” and call it a day. We’re talking about the MASTER of the Universe here, and HIS Torah.

Unless of course “we will understand” means something different, more than just “we will take the time to figure out WHAT we are doing, and perhaps even WHY.” In fact, I recall an earlier experience

that answers the question, and the question answers the experience.

At the beginning of my career in Kiruv Rechokim—outreach—I sat down across from a young, “unaffiliated” Jewish young man who was “picked up” at the wall. For some reason, he had agreed to come into the yeshivah and talk to someone about Judaism.

My job was to impress him enough with Torah ideas, and show him the folly of his non-Torah lifestyle, so that he would remain at the yeshivah. Perhaps he would learn enough to eventually become committed to a Torah way of life.

He was a very nice guy, and we got along well from the start. Over the course of an hour, we discussed a lot of ideas and I really felt as if I was impacting him. I don’t think we argued once. I was so confident about the direction of the meeting that I was all ready to hear him say, “Sign me up!”

That’s why I was totally shocked to hear him say instead,

“I heard what you said and all of it makes a lot of sense. But, I’m leaving anyhow.”

I must have sat there with my mouth open. For the first time in the entire hour I was speechless. I did not know what to say or do, except to say good-bye as he left. I never saw or heard from him again. It was such a confusing moment for me.

I was no stranger to cognitive dissonance. As a “Chozer b’Teshuvah,” I experienced it first hand, in me and in others. But, it usually manifested itself in either total disinterest in what I had to say, or a very argumentative partner. I had never experienced it from someone who politely heard me out, agreed with me along the way, and then just walked out. My brain just kept on saying, “This does not compute. This does not compute.”

In retrospect, I would say that he had reached the level of, “We will do,” but not of “We will understand.” I reached his brain, but not his heart. Few people ever go with their brain over their heart, so when his heart said, “Let’s go,” his brain just said, “Okay.”

There is another story that is told about someone who was biking through Israel, and looked the part. But, he came into the yeshivah nonetheless and spoke to someone for a while. Well, he allowed someone to speak to him, because he said almost nothing. Then, when the session was over, he got up and left and that was the end of him.

Or so they thought. The yeshivah bocher who had spoken to him returned to the States a couple of years later to complete his college degree. Being religious he naturally asked if he could room with someone more like him, and amazingly there was actually another Orthodox Jew who had requested the same thing.

On the first day he moved into the dorm, he found his co-religionist already in the room. As he prepared to introduce himself, the other person said, “I know you.”

“You do? Have we met before,” he asked, unable to place the face.

The other person just smiled, and finally told him, “You don’t recognize me,” he said, “because the last time we met I looked a lot different.”

“When was that?” he said, thinking maybe his new roommate was mistaken.

“About two years ago, when I was biking through Israel. We spoke for about an hour in your yeshivah, and then I left.”

The bocher’s face dropped. He was stunned. How? Why? When? he thought to himself. Never in a million years did he even consider that the person he spoke to that day would ever have ANYTHING to do with religion! He had written him off completely.

“How did it happen?” the bocher asked, astonishment in his voice.

“The truth is, when I left I had no plans of looking back. But as I biked through Europe, some things you said kept coming back to me, and I thought about them. When I got back to the States, I met this rabbi who invited me to come for Shabbos. I’m not sure why I accepted, maybe because of our discussion back in the yeshivah, but I did. One Shabbos led to another, which led to another, and before I knew it, I was going to classes . . . and here I am today, keeping the mitzvos!”

We can say that the original discussion gave the biker “Na’aseh,” the intellectual basis of what he should do. It took time to sink in, and once it did, he ended up going for Shabbos which is known to add the “Nishma” element to a person’s commitment. More people become religious and faster because of Shabbos than any class or seminar.

If a person thinks that Shabbos is a “Nishma” experience, it is nothing compared to Har Sinai and G-d talking from above the mountain. The level of intellectual and emotional clarity has been unparalleled throughout history, mimicking what it is like for the angels ALL the time. In Heaven, there is no separation between “Na’aseh” and “Nishma.” How can there be? The level of Divine revelation eliminates any possibility of a yetzer hara.

This is why we say the “Shema” out loud, and “Boruch Shem” in a whisper. Kabbalah explains that the “Shema” corresponds to the unity in Heaven and the angels. There is no doubt about G-d and His Providence there, so we say it clearly and strongly.

“Boruch Shem,” however, corresponds to our world, where intellectual confusion is possible and therefore emotional backlash. People doubt the existence of G-d. They have doubts about His Providence, or His fairness. It’s a confusing world, requiring one to have a lot of emunah. Therefore, we whisper this verse to indicate that we lack emotional clarity about this, but trust in it all the same.

The angels however say “Boruch Shem” out loud, because they already have that clarity, the kind that we will have in Yemos HaMoshiach. It is the kind of clarity we also achieve on Yom Kippur when we become like angels, and therefore say “Boruch Shem” out loud. You don’t get much more “Nishma” than on Yom Kippur.

This is what the Omer-Count was preparing us for all along. The 32 days until Lag B’Omer, the gematria of “leiv,” develop the heart. The 17 days after until the end, the gematria of “tov,” are supposed to turn the heart into a “good” one, the one we mention in the Shema when we say “b’chol levavecha.” We are meant to serve G-d with the yetzer tov AND the yetzer hara.

Ultimately, this is what stands in the way of a person reaching the level of “Nishma,” the yetzer hara. The brain can agree to truth relatively easily. The heart has to take it up with the “board,” and the yetzer hara sits on that board, and often sways the vote.

This is why we usually read Parashas Bamidbar in advance of Shavuos. It might not be obvious at first, but after reading the Maharal, it is as obvious as it gets. He elaborates on what the Talmud means when it says that a person has to make themselves like a “desert,” if they want to maintain a deep connection to Torah.

He goes into a lot of detail about the idea, and it is must-reading, especially in advance of Shavuos. The gist is that a person has to realize that they are, in essence, a soul, and not a body, and that material pleasures are not the goal, just a temporal means to a very lofty end. The more a person realizes this, the more spiritual goals will become their priority, and the yetzer hara will become less powerful. The more a person will be able to sincerely say “Nishma” as well as “Na’aseh.”

It’s Not Where You’re at Now — It’s Where You’re Coming From

Rabbi Ben Tzion Shafier (Torah.org)

“Count the heads of the congregation of Israel according to their families, according to their fathers’ houses, by the number of the names, every male according to the head count.” — Bamidbar 1:2

Less than a year after the giving of the Torah, HASHEM told Moshe to again count the Jewish People. The Siforno points out that this counting was unique as it counted each person by name, whereas thirty-eight years later, when the Jews were about to enter the land of Israel and were counted again, there is no mention of counting by name. The Siforno explains that this is because the generation that left Egypt was made up of unique individuals, each worthy of being singled out. The next generation, however, wasn’t on that level, so everyone was counted only by number and not by name.

It is clear from the Siforno that the generation that left Mitzrayim was

greater than the generation who entered the Land of Israel. This concept is very difficult to understand. The people who left Egypt were slaves their entire lives. They had almost no education or opportunity to learn. From the time they were children, they had little time to focus on anything other than survival. The generation who entered the Land of Israel had a very different upbringing. They were all born in the desert. Daily they observed the Glory of HASHEM encamped on the Mishkan. On a regular basis, they watched the clouds of glory ushering them from place to place. Each morning, they saw manna being delivered to their doorstep. They experienced the miracle of a rock providing them millions of gallons of water daily. But even more, they weren’t engaged in earning a living; their entire focus was on learning Torah. Taught by the greatest rebbeim, unencumbered by physical needs or distractions, they spend their days and nights in yeshiva. Clearly, they knew more Torah than the people who had just left Mitzrayim. How could the earlier generation have been greater than this one?

The answer to this lies in recognizing the ultimate measure of greatness.

It is said in the name of the Gra that when a person leaves this earth, he will stand in front of the heavenly tribunal and be shown a picture. It is a picture of a great person. An individual who changed himself and changed the very world he lived in. And they say to this man, “Why isn’t that you?”

“Me? Little me?” he responds. “You want me to be that great man? A talmid chacham. A tzaddik?”

And they will answer, “That is you. That is you, had you lived up to your potential, had you become what you were destined to be.”

The point is that they hold up a picture of that man. Not a picture of the Chasam Sofer. Not a picture of Rebbe Akiva Eiger. A picture of him. Based on his talents and abilities. Based on the times he was born into. The only question they ask is, “How much of his potential did he reach? How much of him did he become?”

This seems to be the answer to the Siforno. Surely, the generation that entered Israel had learned more Torah than did the generation that came before it. They were far greater Torah scholars. But they were born into it. From their youth, that’s all they knew. That was all that was important in their world — so of course they amassed great fortunes of Torah knowledge. The generation that left Egypt, however, didn’t have those advantages. They didn’t come to study Torah until late in their lives. Their growth required them to give up everything they had been exposed to. They had to leave behind the very world that they had known. So while objectively they may not have been on the same level, actually they were far greater — because based on where they had come from and the level they reached, they had grown far more.

This concept has a very practical application.

We live in amazing times, and one of its outgrowths is the baal teshuvah movement. Thousands of Jews brought up with nothing have returned to a Torah true life. Their sacrifices are huge, and their personal growth is extraordinary, as they leave behind everything to reclaim the heritage of their fathers. They then marry and bring up the next generation, and their children, who enjoy a yeshiva education, often the rank amongst the finest Bnei Torah.

And wondrous though this is, it sometimes creates a disparity. You see, as intelligent as the parents may be, they began their Torah education late in life. And while their sincerity may be impressive, their skills and actual knowledge is often lacking. Their children, on the other hand, attend the finest yeshivas, and from a tender young age are steeped in Torah learning and mitzvos. It can happen that by 6th grade, the child knows more than the parent. As the child matures, the gap widens and this may lead him to look down at his parents with an attitude of, “My father, he’s a good guy and all that, but what does he know? He’s an am ha’aretz. (ignoramus).”

This Siforno may be a guiding light on this issue. What we see is that a person’s stature is defined less by who he is now than by how much he has grown, and that growth is credited to him. The scale of measure is where he is coming from. How far has he gone? How much of that change is because of his fortitude and will, and how

much the environment that he was in, simply going with the flow? So, it may well be that your father doesn't know as much as you, yet in the World to Come, he will tower over you. It could be that his Chumash and Rashi is more valuable than your learning all of Shas.

Who's In, Who's Out – and Why

Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein (Torah.org)

The Leviim according to their fathers' tribe were not counted among them. Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: However, you shall not count the tribe of Levi, and you shall not take up their number among the Bnei Yisrael.

Pretty straightforward, right? Now read the pesukim again, slowly. Hashem tells Moshe not to count the Leviim. But the Torah already stated that Moshe had refrained from counting them, even before Hashem told him anything! So what was he told that he didn't already know? What is the difference between counting and taking up their number? There must be a difference, because otherwise, the second phrase would not have been included. What does "according to their fathers' tribe" add? Would it not have sufficed to simply call them "Leviim" and leave it at that?

Rashi always help us through the text. Sometimes, he helps us even more than what we were looking for when we turned to him. Like here.

Rashi offers two explanation for the command to Moshe. "The King's legion is worthy to be counted by itself. Alternatively, HKBH foresaw that a decree would be issued in the future upon all who where counted (from age 20 and up), that they would perish in the wilderness. He said, 'These Leviim should not be included in that group, for they are Mine, since they did not go astray with the Golden Calf.'"

These explanations might be the basis for understanding the subtleties in our pesukim. Moshe did not count the Leviim, even before Hashem instructed him. He perhaps thought on his own of a variation of the second explanation that Rashi offers. He did not think of the edict

that people would die in the wilderness – that had not yet come into being. He did, however, think that the Leviim were entitled to special distinction because they had all remained loyal to Hashem and did not stumble at the Eigel. For this reason alone, he balked at counting them among the rest of the people. This is why the Torah mentions "according to their fathers' tribe" – Moshe meant to attach special prominence to the entire tribe of Levi because of their performance in the Eigel incident.

Hashem tells Moshe that he was correct in not counting the Leviim – but not for his reason. The compelling reason to keep them separate is not related to the Eigel, but to their role as the King's legion. Moshe's reasoning suggested that the Leviim possessed some special talent or depth of thought. Since they had behaved so markedly differently than everyone else, they probably shared some special quality that others did not. That might be reason enough to place them on a pedestal, and to honor them above the rest of the nation.

Hashem told Moshe that this was not true. They were not smarter or intrinsically holier than the rest of the people. They were entitled to special treatment as a group – as a match / tribe – because of their special avodah, their service of Hashem. In other words, the key factor is match – their group designation – but this does not imply some special capability inherited from their fathers. Therefore the pasuk that tells us about Moshe's unilateral decision makes mention of "fathers," but Hashem's instructions makes no mention of them.

Hashem's command is further buttressed by warning "you shall not take up their number." The phrase means that he should not include them in a national census. Literally, however, it connotes raising up. In other words, Moshe is told not to raise them up, not to honor them, for some supposed gift or talent that the rest of the people are ought to recognize and extol. They should not be elevated over the rest of the people, and honored for some presumed distinction within them. Indeed, they should be treated differently – but only because they are the King's legion, and the honor due them comes directly from Hashem. It is His honor that they bear, and not their own.

קניזה קדושה
אור ירושלים

Ohr Yerushalayim
invites you to an
עונג יום טוב
combined with our
Annual
Siyum Mishnayos
on second day שבועות
Speaker: Rabbi YY Katz
following Mincha
at 8.50pm

שבועות

קניזה קדושה
אור ירושלים

Ohr Yerushalayim
invite to you to
תיקון ליל שבועות
Shiurim Programme

 1:00am - 1:45am Rabbi Moshe Wolberg שליט"א	 1:50am - 2:35am Rabbi Yisroel Meir Adler שליט"א	 2:40am - 3:20am Rabbi Yakov Hibbert שליט"א
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Chavrusa Programme in association
with Manchester Mesivta in
the Hall from 12.45am
Shiur rooms available
for learning b'Chavrusa
Shacharis 3.23am
Refreshments kindly sponsored by Brackmans Bakery