

זכור את יום השבת לקדשו.
ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך,
ויום השביעי שבת לה'

SHABBAT LASHEM

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TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

JODIE FRANKS
SHEVET AVICHAH

This week's haftara recounts the story of the parents of Shimshon: Manoach and his wife. An angel appears to Eshet Manoach and tells her that she should not drink wine or eat impure foods, as she would soon give birth to a *nazir*.

The *malach's* message is repeated, almost verbatim, three times in a short story. Why, when Eshet Manoach had heard the angel, and told her husband all about it, did he insist upon davening to Hashem for a personal appearance from the angel? The text tells us that Hashem heard Manoach's cry and answered him, so clearly the *malach's* came back for a reason. What was the purpose of the angel's second appearance?

Surely the reason for Manoach requesting the angel to come to him was not to talk about the rules of *nezirut*, as they were to be clearly found in the Torah. Indeed, if he was not already learned in the laws, there would have been many learned men who could have educated Manoach, without the need for a *malach*. Rav Schwab suggests that Manoach wanted the angel to come to him for another reason – to talk about chinuch. How could Manoach raise a child as a *nazir* if he himself wasn't keeping to the laws of *nezirut*? Taking a second look at the *malach's* message to Manoach, we can see that the verbs such as תִּשְׁמַר and תֹּאכַל can be translated in two ways – either addressing the third person feminine singular, in this case Eshet Manoach, or second person masculine in the

future. This time around, rather than simply repeating his previous instructions, the angel was talking directly to Manoach. He, too, needed to keep the laws of *nezirut* in order to become a role model for his future son. People learn from the actions of others far more than their words. Having both his mother and father setting a consistent example for him ensured that Shimshon would remain strong in his beliefs.

As much as this is a beautiful example for learning from the actions of our parents, it is also important to retain our individuality and forge our own paths in life. In 'Az Yashir' every day, we read יה א-לי וְאֶנְוֶה אֶלְקֵי אָבִי וְאַרְמְנֶנּוּ. "This is my God, and I will build Him a Sanctuary; The God of my father, and I will exalt Him." It is interesting that we refer to Hashem as first "mine", and then "my father's" in quick succession. Rabbi Frand comments that whilst we need to become that link in the chain, and connect to the God of our forefathers and families, we also need to build our own relationship with Hashem, and not to rely solely on that which our tradition has given us.

When parents bless their children every Shabbat, they take the pesukim from this week's parasha. Whilst there are many ideas and pesukim from Tanach talking directly about the parent-child relationship, our mothers and fathers bless us that Hashem should look after us. This strengthens Rabbi Frand's idea that whilst our familial religion is vital, our core connection with Judaism should come from a personal relationship directly with Hashem. This is another link between our parasha and haftara; in a subtle way they both express the importance of being a role model to others in our actions, as well as being sure in our own beliefs and religious choices.

JODIE IS A PARTICIPANT ON OUR LILMOD UL'LAMED LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME.

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NASO 5780: MAKING EVERYONE COUNT

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



At times, Sefer Bamidbar can seem a little tedious. It is not by coincidence that the English name given to this book is “Numbers”. Chazal referred to it as חומש הפקודים – literally ‘the book of countings’.

Particularly the opening parshiot are filled with intricate lists of numbers, head-counts, subtotals and the final tallies. Again and again we read of the instruction to count. Again and again we are told of the numbers in each tribe, in each encampment and in the nation as a whole. Why all the detail and why the repetition?

In order to answer, let’s begin with another question relating to Parashat Naso. Following the census of the rest of Bnei Yisrael, there is a counting of the three families of the Levi’im – Gershon, Kehat and Merari. The Torah lists each one of them together with their tally and the specific job they had in carrying parts of the Mishkan. Unusually however, this census is cut off in the middle. The description of Kehat and their role appears at the end of Parashat Bamidbar, while Gershon and Merari appear at the beginning of Naso.

The Abarbanel gives a fascinating answer as to why the parshiot were split up in such a strange fashion. He notes that these three families are not listed in chronological order. Seemingly the Torah should have started with Gershon, the oldest. Nonetheless, Kehat is mentioned first as they had the most significant role in terms of carrying the Aron (which housed the *luchot*) and other *keilim* of the Mishkan. The Kli Yakar and others point out how it is a sign of *kavod haTorah*, honouring the Torah, to mention them first.

The problem with this is that Gershon, as

the *bechor* (firstborn), should also have been entitled to a special status. Thus explains the Abarbanel that since he ‘lost out’ on the honour of carrying the most significant vessels, the Torah saw fit to mention him in pride of place, at the start of a new parasha, in order to compensate for the slight he may have felt. In listing the different families, the Torah took pains to ensure that none of them should appear to be devalued.

The essence of the counting of the people in Sefer Bamidbar is about highlighting the value of each and every individual. Rashi writes that the entire purpose of counting was to show חיבתן לפניו – how precious they were before

Hashem.

Akeidat Yitzchak writes in his commentary that: שכל אחד מהם יהיה לו חשיבות בפני עצמו כמלך וככהן – they were counted in a way that each one of them was given significance like a king or a Kohen. It is far from coincidence that the way the Torah says to count is literally to “raise up their heads” – to elevate them and show how precious and worthwhile they are.

GERSHON, AS THE BECHOR, SHOULD HAVE BEEN ENTITLED TO A SPECIAL STATUS. SINCE HE ‘LOST OUT’ ON THE HONOUR OF CARRYING THE MOST SIGNIFICANT VESSELS, THE TORAH SAW FIT TO MENTION HIM IN PRIDE OF PLACE, AT THE START OF A NEW PARASHA

Perhaps it would have seemed more efficient for the Torah to leave out some of the numbers. Perhaps the longest parshiot could have been shortened if they included just the final numbers without the repeated focus on each individual, each family and each tribe. But that would not have conveyed this crucial message. The Torah went out of its way to teach us that each individual has a unique and meaningful role to play. It is only when everybody does, that the final number can be added up.

Shabbat Shalom!

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ASHIRA LASHEM

DANIA MANN-WINEBERG | SHEVET AVICHAJ

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדוֹד הִנֵּה מְהֻטָּב וּמֵהֵנָעִים שְׁבֵת אַחִים גַּם יַחַד:
כְּשֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב עַל־הָרֹאשׁ יֵרֵד עַל־הַזָּקֵן זְקוֹאֵהוּן שִׁירָד עַל־פִּי מְדוּתָיו:
כְּטֶל־חֶרְמוֹן שִׁירָד עַל־הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי שָׁם צִוָּה ה' אֶת־הַבְּרִכָּה חַיִּים עַד־הָעוֹלָם:

A song of ascents. Of David. How good and how pleasant it is that brothers dwell together.

It is like fine oil on the head running down onto the beard, the beard of Aharon, that comes down over the collar of his robe.

Like the dew of Chermon that falls upon the mountains of Zion. There Hashem ordained blessing, everlasting life.

Judging by its popularity at Machane Chadrei Ochel and Family Friday Nights alike, it seems clear that 'Hineh Ma Tov' is one of the older Ruach songs still in circulation. Whether it is preceded by a healthy dose of 'na na na na na's, or perhaps the 'tipex, topics' saga, Tehilim 133 has made quite an impression on the Bnei Akiva Ruach scene, and it isn't difficult to deduce why. The not so subtle message of *achdut* reflected in the words is not only iconic but summarizes much of what Jewish youth movements are about. It serves as a reminder that although we might not all dwell in the same location for the majority of the time, we are united by our strong ideology and Torah values.

The second pasuk of this Tehilim compares the *achdut* between the Jewish people to the oil that was used to anoint Aharon, the Kohen Gadol. This comparison denotes the strength that comes from unity. Just as a single stick is easily snapped, but a handful of sticks would be far more difficult to break, so too a group of people who are unified is significantly more durable than any individual. This does not just refer to physically standing together, but highlights the need for individuals to support each other, to listen to each other's points of view and to be empathetic to the struggles of others.

In reference to the third pasuk, the Malbim picks up on the fact that the dew of Chermon was only used to help the mountains of Tzion. This highlights the altruistic nature of true *achdut*, where individuals contribute resources and help in situations where there is no personal gain to be made.

On a slightly more modernish note, the 'tipex, topics' piyut usually follows one of two routes. The first is a classic 'listen and copy' style, which is often greeted by noises of protest originating from those amongst us who favour the second route, in which the 'congregation', anticipating the next line, sing it independently. This is accompanied by a feeling of smugness that naturally stems from knowing what comes after barking up the wrong tree. These two *nusachim* symbolise two very important aspects of the dynamic within Bnei Akiva, and of Avodat Hashem. It is important to follow rules, to listen to authority figures, and to emanate the behavior of role models. Yet, there is also value to using one's own initiative to work out what to do in given situations and to think for oneself.



WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Sichot B'Ivrit**, our new Ivrit class taught by the Bnot Sherut continues on **Sunday at 4.30pm**. To sign up head to bit.ly/ba-ivrit. For more information contact Eli at israel@bauk.org.

- Help us reach 100 **Acts of Kindness!** By (anonymously) sharing your deeds you will inspire others to give their time, and let them know where and how they can! Fill in the form at tinyurl.com/BA-100AOK.

- Missing sviva? **Virtual Sviva** takes place at **3pm every Sunday** over Zoom. ID: 208-209-1319, Password: YadAchim. Email Zoe at svivot@bauk.org for more details!

- **Student Bet Midrash** continues on Thursday 11th June! We encourage everyone to continue with their regular chavrutot/chaburot over video chat, and invite you to join us at **7.50pm** for a thought from one of our Lilmod Ul'lamed participants followed by a shiur. Email Chana at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions. Zoom links will be posted on the Student Bet Midrash Facebook page.

- **Mazal Tov** to **Gideon Bratt** (Shevet Achia, Israel Worker 5773) and **Romy Spicer** on the occasion of their wedding.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to stay informed of our online content!

- To receive weekly copies of **Shabbat Lashem** and our **Choveret Chinuchit** activity pack, sign up for our mailing list at bauk.org/contact.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Why does the pasuk state twice that Bnei Yisrael observed the command to expel contaminated people from the camp? (See **Malbim on 5:4**)

2. Why is a *nazir* commanded to grow their hair? (See **Rav Hirsch on 6:5**)

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3PM

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