



לעילוי נשמת

David ben ImaShalom

Sha'arei Eliyahu

Table Talk

פרשת במדבר

כל-זכר לגלגלתם

This week we read Parashat במדבר. The second Pasuk of our parasha reads *שאו את-ראש כל-עדת בני-ישראל למשפחותם לבית אבתם במספר שמות כל-זכר לגלגלתם..* Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by families following their fathers' houses [i.e. not mothers], a head count of every male according to the number of their names. The word גלגלתם is very similar to the word גלגול [reincarnation]. The Rama MiPano in his Sefer Asara Ma'amarot says that Moshe Rabbenu new how many times every Jew had to return to

SHABBAT SCHEDULE	
Mincha	7:20 PM
Candle Lighting	7:57 PM
Shacharit	8:30 AM
Shabbat Derasha	6:00 PM
Mincha	7:25 PM
SUNSET	8:16 PM
Aravit (Shabbat Ends)	9:06 PM
Rabbenu Tam	9:29 PM

SHORT & SWEET

Our Parasha is called Bamidbar, whose root word is Midbar [Desert]. Our sages tell us that in order for the Torah, which was given in the Midbar of Sinai, to be properly retained within the one that learns and studies it one must be Humble like the desert. Once a person reaches humility then the Torah will be absorbed into the essence of the person studying it.

~ R' Yosef Akilov

this world as a גלגול and therefore the Pasuk before this tells us that this was given to Moshe alone. The Hida adds on this asking why does the Pasuk only read that Moshe is to count the men and not the women? Seems to mean that only men come back into a new גלגול and not women. This is as the Arizal says the women will not come to this world as a גלגול. Rav Gaon Shlomo Palak says that anytime one prays for someone we mention the mothers name and not the fathers name. He says that the reason for this is that if the father was deceased and came back to this world as a גלגול then the wrong name is being used, as the neshama of the father is in this world again under a different name. But when one uses the mothers name the mother doesn't come back into a new גלגול so the prayer has an effect.

The Shlah HaKadosh says that for a man and woman to have a child they need to each have the correct Neshama. Meaning that the man needs a masculine and the woman a feminine Neshama. If either one doesn't then that couple will have a very difficult time having children. As we see that Yitzhak had a feminine Neshama until the Akeda. Also the Arizal tells us that there are certain [abominable] sins that will cause a man to return to this world as a woman.

Sefer Ha'idra says that after the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash there are no new Neshamot that come to this world as they are all recycled to finish all the Mitzvot until the coming of the Moshiach. This however doesn't apply to women as we pointed out above and therefore the Neshamot of women are all new. This is another reason why women have a lot less mitzvot than men.

Shabbat Shalom U'Mevorach

~ R' Yosef Akilov

1. Which Jews flew over the Jordan River back in 2488? (note that this is 3,176 years before the invention of the plane)
2. Which miracle happened when Moshe counted Shevet Levi?
3. Why was the Torah given to Am Israel in the Midbar and not in Eretz Israel?
4. Is a Bechor (1st born) more holy than his siblings nowadays?
5. Why was Shevet Levi the least in population, if in reality they were the finest?

1. In the year 2488, when Am Israel entered Eretz Israel, the Kohanim who were "carrying" the Aron Kodesh miraculously transported in the air as they hovered right over the Jordan River. {Yehoshua 4:11, Soch 35a}

2. Moshe Rabbenu did not feel it appropriate to go around the Camp of Levi counting even the newborns who were one month old. Hashem told him "You do your part and I will do Mine!" As Moshe walked up to the tents a Bat Kol announced the amount of people inside. {Bamidbar Rabbah 3:9, Tanchuma 16, Rav Chaim Shmuelovitz ז"ל}

3. Just as the desert is public property, being equally accessible to all who want to use it, so too, the Torah is everyone's to acquire. It's not like gold which only limited people acquired in the California Gold Rush. It's free for all! And it's more priceless than any gold and treasure. {Mechilta, Nefesh Chaim 4:16}

4. Even nowadays a bechor possesses a greater holiness than his siblings. After all, when the Moshiah comes, the Bechorot will be invited to do certain tasks in the Beit Hamikdash! {Rav Shlomo Mandel}

5. Since Shevet Levi relied on Am Israel for support, Hashem did not want to trouble Am Israel to have to worry about supporting too many. We see from here that "quality is greater than quantity," as Hashem chose Shevet Levi as His favorites! {Britsker Rav}

The Holiday of Shavuot

Regarding the giving of the Torah, the Torah states (Shemot 19): “And they travelled from Refidim and they arrived at the Sinai Desert and they camped in the desert; and Israel camped there opposite the mountain.”

Rabbenu Chaim ben Atar, the saintly “Or Ha’Chaim,” asks that in the previous verses the Torah states, “On the third month of the Jewish nation leaving Egypt, on this day they had come to the Sinai desert.” If so, why does the Torah repeat the fact that they “camped in the desert”? Is it not clear that if they arrived at the desert that they camped there as well? What does the Torah mean to teach us by writing this?

The saintly Or Ha’Chaim explains that the Torah is trying to convey to us three key principles regarding receiving the Torah without which accepting the Torah would have been impossible and because of which Hashem decided to give us the Torah.

The first is “Travelling from Refidim” (in Hebrew, “Refidim” is similar to the word “Rifyon” meaning laxity) before the giving of the Torah, for the Jewish nation experienced great carelessness and lethargy as all freed slaves do and even so, they prepared themselves and overcame their natural character-traits in order to be able to accept the Torah in a zealous and energetic manner by accepting upon themselves not to become lazy in their Torah learning. This is indeed the natural course of Torah learning that the Torah needs strengthening and recommitment at all times. It is for this reason that any time the Torah mentions learning Torah, the Torah adds a boost of encouragement as the verse states, “This Sefer Torah shall not budge from your lips and you shall delve in it day and night etc. have I not commanded you to be strong and courageous?” The Torah therefore needed to point out that they “travelled from Refidim,” for they had truly been slacking off, but even so they had energized themselves to accept the Torah with desire and joy and they had thus “travelled away” from the laxity they possessed beforehand, for this is a great principle and important condition for meriting receiving the Torah’s crown.

The second principle is “And they arrived at the Sinai desert and they camped in the desert.” This means that the Jewish nation reached the lofty level wherein they made themselves like a desert which is ownerless and everyone walks through and tramples on. Similarly, the Jewish nation reached a high level of humility and submissiveness, for without doing so, one cannot merit accepting the Torah as the Torah does not identify itself with the arrogant. It is also for this reason that Moshe Rabbenu was the one chosen to receive the Torah, for he served as an outstanding symbol of extreme humility, the likes of which the world had never seen. Additionally, the Torah was given only on the lowest of mountains, Mount Sinai, for Hashem’s presence does not rest on the arrogant and the haughty; only because of their humility did the Jewish nation merit receiving the crown of Torah.

The third principle is “And Israel camped there opposite the mountain.” The Torah uses the singular form of the word “camped” in order to teach us that the Jewish nation was completely unified at that time, like one man with one heart. This also serves as an important condition in order to receive the Torah, for the Torah was not given to individuals among the Jewish nation; rather, it was given to the entire nation as one. It is for this reason that the Torah must be read in public. Indeed the verse states, “May a sword be to the loners” referring to those who learn Torah alone, for one cannot merit having a correct understanding of the Torah unless he learns with someone else who will be able to bring the errors he has made in his learning to his attention. (Once one masters the principles for how to properly learn Torah, one may then learn from the works of the Acharonim alone, for by delving in them one will likewise be able to realize if he has erred.) Praiseworthy is the nation whose people come together to learn Torah on the night of Shavuot in a place where the holy presence of Hashem rests. Regarding this does the verse state, “And Israel camped there opposite the mountain,” for they merited receiving the Torah as one. May we likewise merit gleaning from the eternal light of the Torah by virtue of our true humility through accepting the true interpretation of the Torah from those greater than us and admitting that their interpretation is indeed true.

Let us try our very best to always be completely unified, for this will cause Hashem to rest His holy presence on us and we will thereby merit receiving the crown of the Torah.