

Our Part in the Torah – Shavuot/Naso

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וְיִהְיֶה בַּיּוֹם כְּלוֹת מִשָּׁה לְהַקִּים אֶת הַמִּשְׁכָּן וַיִּמְשַׁח אֹתוֹ וַיִּקְדָּשׁ אֹתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל כְּלָיו
וְאֵת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֵת כָּל כְּלָיו וַיִּמְשַׁחֵם וַיִּקְדָּשׁ אֹתָם. וַיִּקְרִיבוּ נְשִׂאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל רִאשֵׁי בֵּית אֲבֹתָם
הֵם נְשִׂאֵי הַמִּטּוֹת הֵם הָעֹלְמִים עַל הַפְּקָדִים. (במדבר ז, א-ב)

Many topics appear in our parsha, each that warrants a shiur on its own, Sotah, Nazir, Birkat Kohanim, Korbanot HaNesi'im. In this shiur we will mostly be speaking about Shavuot, but before we begin, a short introduction related to parshat hashavua.

At the end of the parsha we find the chapter of Korbanot HaNesi'im, the twelve korbanot brought by the heads of each tribe, during the inauguration of the Mishkan. The Gemara (Megila 10b) tells us that when a passuk begins with the word וְיִהְיֶה, it indicates a צַעַר. Why was there צַעַר during the inauguration of the Mishkan? Quite the opposite, it should have been a time of great celebration! Chazal give various reasons. Although it was a joyous day, it was also the day that Nadav and Avihu died (Bamidbar Raba 13, 5). In the prior seven days, Moshe was serving as Kohen Gadol and on the eighth day, this task was transferred to Aharon, and this caused Moshe צַעַר (Zevachim 102a).

We then find one of the most "repetitious" portions in the Torah, the Korbanot HaNesi'im. Each day the Nasi of each tribe (in order of their departure when travelling in the Midbar), gave *exactly the same korban*.

We know that the Torah is not verbose, *every letter* has significance. For example, Shlomo HaMelech learned that he should add an extra ten Menorot in the 1st Beit HaMikdash, from *one extra letter yud* in the word תִּיעַשֶׂה הַמְנוֹרָה (שמות כה, לא). (Many printed chumashim omit the yud, but if you look in an actual sefer Torah, there is an extra yud). Shlomo also added an additional ten Shulchanot alongside the extra ten Menorot - he learned the one from the other.

If the Torah had wanted to be concise, it could have said –

וְיִהְיֶה הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן אֶת קָרְבָּנוֹ נְחֹשֶׁן בֶּן עַמִּינָדָב לְמִטַּה יְהוּדָה. וְקָרְבָּנוֹ
קָעֶרֶת כֶּסֶף אַחַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ מִזְרֵק אֶחָד כֶּסֶף שְׁבַעִים שֶׁקֶל בְּשֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ
שְׁנֵייהֶם מְלֵאִים סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן לְמִנְחָה. כֹּף אַחַת עֶשְׂרֵה זָהָב מְלֵאָה קִטְרֶת. פֶּר אֶחָד בֶּן
בְּקָר אֵיל אֶחָד כֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד בֶּן שְׁנַתוֹ לְעֹלָה. שְׁעִיר עִזִּים אֶחָד לְחֻטָּאת. וּלְזִבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בְּקָר
שְׁנַיִם אֵילִם חֲמִשָּׁה עֲתוּדִים חֲמִשָּׁה כֶּבֶשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה חֲמִשָּׁה זֶה קָרְבָּנוֹ נְחֹשֶׁן בֶּן עַמִּינָדָב.
(במדבר ז, יב-יז)

Followed by –

וַיְהִי הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁנִי אֶת אוֹתוֹ קִרְבָּן נִתְנָאֵל בֶּן צוּעָר לְמִטָּה יִשָּׁשְׁכָר.

וַיְהִי הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי אֶת אוֹתוֹ קִרְבָּן אֶלְיָאֵב בֶּן חִלּוֹ לְמִטָּה זְבוּלֹן.

וַיְהִי הַמִּקְרִיב בַּיּוֹם הָרְבִיעִי אֶת אוֹתוֹ קִרְבָּן אֶלְיָצוּר בֶּן שְׂדִיאוּר לְמִטָּה רְאוּבֵן.

וְכוּ'

... and saved 43 entire psukkim! Since the Torah did not do so, each letter of those 72 repetitive psukkim is *vital* and teaches us something. If you read Bamidbar Raba 13, one of the lengthiest chapters in the Midrash, it says how, although they physically brought the same korban, each tribe had completely *different kavanot* when they brought that same korban, and it goes on to detail the kavanot of each and every tribe. Each tribe had kavanot that related to their unique purpose in Am Yisrael, as detailed in Yaakov's blessings before he died.

In previous shiurim (see [Acharei Mot-Kedoshim 2026](#)) we discussed how each of the Twelve Tribes has a different purpose and role to fulfil in the "unit" that is Am Yisrael. In this week's shiur we will explore how that unique role relates to Torah.

In parshat Yitro the passuk says (שמות יט, ב) וַיִּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדַת הָהָר (שמות יט, ב) and we all know the famous Rashi (ibid.), why וַיִּחַן is in the singular and not as it should be, in the plural - that all twelve tribes encamped around Har Sinai כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד אֶחָד בְּלֵב אֶחָד, in total unity.

The gematria of וַיִּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדַת הָהָר is 1222, which is also the gematria of "חֲלֻקְנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ", as it says in the Mishna יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אֶלְ-לִקְנוֹ שְׂיִבְנֶה בַּיִת הַמְקֻדָּשׁ בְּמִהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְתִן חֻלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ (אבות ה, כ).

What does חֲלֻקְנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ mean?

All of Am Yisrael (around six million people) stood at Har Sinai and experienced the revelation of HKB"H uttering the first two commandments directly. *All* of Am Yisrael heard them. It is the first and *only* time that Divine revelation occurred to *so many* people at once (and not to individuals, as it previously had and subsequently did). The intensity of it was such that Am Yisrael begged Moshe to act as intermediary and relay the remaining eight commandments, which he did. All six million heard the *same* Torah, the *same* words, the *same* psukkim. It was *all* communicated to them on Har Sinai. The gematria of וַיִּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדַת הָהָר is also תוֹרָה בְּכָתָב בְּעַל פֶּה, the inescapable unity of the Torah. It is the *same* Torah that has been passed down through the generations from father to son, mother to daughter, teacher to student, until the present day. It is the 8th principle in the Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith.

We all have the same Torah, the same Mishna, Gemara, Rishonim, Acharonim, etc., So, what does *חֲלֵקְנוּ בְּתוֹרַתְךָ* mean? How can one person have a *different חֲלֵק* in the *same* Torah? It is obviously not that some mitzvot only apply to one person and not to others (actually there are such mitzvot – some only apply to men, others to women, others to kohanim, levi'im, etc.). I am referring to the "general" mitzvot that apply to *all* of Am Yisrael, men/women/kohanim/levi'im alike. We all have to eat Kosher, keep Shabbat, fast on Yom Kippur, etc. Chas vechalila if someone would say "This part of the Torah doesn't apply to me" and pick and choose which part of the Torah they want to keep (like the Reform do). The *entire* Torah is incumbent on us all, as HKB"H instructed. It is integral to our covenant with HKB"H made at Har Sinai.

The answer to the above question is that everyone heard the *same* Torah on Har Sinai, but each internalized it *differently*. Six million people heard the same *כִּבֵּד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ*, but one person internalized it as –

"I am going to build a 'granny cottage' for my parents for when they get old (in 30-years-time) so they will be nearby and I can look after them."

Others internalized it as -

"I am going to stand up whenever my parents enter the room."

"I am going to buy my mom an extra special present for her next birthday."

"I am going to make my parents proud by scoring an A+ on my next test."

etc.

The commandment *applies equally* to all of Am Yisrael, but it is like when the Nesi'im brought the same physical korban, each had a *different kavana* when they brought it. Internalizing differently affects *how* we perform the mitzva, not *whether* we perform it or not. We each perform it in the unique context of our unique role and purpose in life.

We are all obliged to observe the laws of Kashrut, for example, but someone, whose purpose in life is to dedicate themselves specifically to things that are kashrut related, will take that specific mitzva to a different level. For example, to research different bugs, the produce they infest and devise different methods to deal with them. To specialize in and write a sefer on all the different food additives (E-441/gelatin, E-422/glycerine, etc.) in the food industry and how they affect kashrut in commercial food companies.

We all have a mitzva to love the *גֵּר*. Most of us apply it by treating them nicely and with respect, or inviting them to meals, etc. But someone, whose purpose in life is to dedicate themselves specifically to things that are *גֵּר* related,

will open a special NPO (Amuta), like עתים, which is dedicated to supporting גרים in Am Yisrael, or become a teacher of גרים during their conversion process.

Being a bug expert who specializes in kashrut does not detract from your obligation to love גרים. neither does being the head of עתים detract from your obligation to keep Kosher. We are *all* obligated to keep the *entire* Torah, but we choose which area to *focus* our attention on, based on our unique purpose in life. That is what חלקנו בתורתך means.

The Torah is infinite in its scope and is all interconnected. Just because your purpose is to dedicate your life to researching the Lechem HaPanim, does not mean that you must not devote time to studying Tanach, Gemara, Halacha, Musar, Torat HaSod, philosophy, etc. Someone who does will discover that each of these "branches" of the Torah will contribute something integral to your central purpose in life. This is what David HaMelech said (תהילים) מִכָּל מַלְמְדֵי הַשֶּׁבִּילִי (תהילים) (קיט, צט) Every person (and every part of the Torah) has something to teach you that relates to your specific purpose in life.

Each of us has our own חלק in life and in the Torah. HKB"H does not want you to be an expert on the Lechem HaPanim, *and* an author of books about bugs in kashrut, *and* the head of a גרים NPO *and* a leading neurosurgeon *and* a dayan in the למונות דין למונות *and* an expert in the philosophy of the Rambam. Each of these experts are following their specific, unique purpose in life. But a neurologist can learn things related to *neurology* from a bug expert and a dayan in the bet din can learn things related to למונות from an expert in the Lechem Hapanim, etc.

Case in point – I learnt a fundamental principle about the Lechem HaPanim from an expert בעל קורא. That does not mean that in order to be an expert on the Lechem HaPanim you need to be an expert בעל קורא, you just need to be receptive and attentive to the multidisciplinary spectrum of the Torah, so that when you discover something from a completely "different" branch, it will stimulate thought how to apply it to your specific "branch". There is not a single branch in the Torah that is *inapplicable* to your specific branch - they are all interconnected. This is what Chazal said in another Mishna שֵׁאֵין לָךְ אָדָם שֵׁאֵין לוֹ שֵׁעָה וְאֵין לָךְ דָּבָר שֵׁאֵין לוֹ מְקוֹם (אבות ד, ג).

Each of us is drawn naturally to a specific area of thought and activity. Some people love baking bread. Others love crunching numbers. Some love physical activity like athletics, dancing, etc. Others like music.

The Vilna Gaon says that despite the fact that prophecy no longer exists, each of us has a measure of Ruach HaKodesh (see shiur on [Re'ei 2022](#)). Our neshama instinctively pushes us in a certain direction, to further us on the path to discovering and focusing our purpose in life.

We should never ignore our own "inner voice" or ridicule others for what their "inner voice" tells them. Those who do delay the inevitable, waste their own lives and cause others to waste theirs pursuing fantasies and misconceptions. We need to learn to trust our instincts, even if they seem surreal and disconnected (even bizarre), and figure out ways to channel them in the service of HKB"H.

Shavuot is the festival of the Torah. On Rosh HaShana HKB"H decrees many things that will happen in the upcoming year – who will live, who will die, how much parnasa we will make, etc. Shavuot is also a kind of "Rosh HaShana". On Shavuot, HKB"H decrees what our *connection to Torah* will look like in the upcoming year, until next Shavuot. How easily we absorb, internalize and remember our learning, how our children progress in their Torah study and observance, etc.

If we want to advance in Torah, we need certain prerequisites.

Before the Nesi'im can bring their korbanot to inaugurate the Mishkan, there needs to be peace and unity between them. The paragraph that immediately precedes the Korbanot HaNesi'im is Birkat Kohanim, which is all about Shalom.

Before we can receive the Torah, we need *שם ישראל נגד הָהָר*, which in gematria is *גְּמִילוּת חֻסְדִּים תּוֹרָה*, we need to treat the rest of Am Yisrael with *גְּמִילוּת חֻסְדִּים* – this is a prerequisite to the Torah.

שם ישראל נגד הָהָר in gematria is also *וַיְחַנּוּ בְּחֻשְׁמִנָּה* (במדבר לג, כט). R' Tzvi Elimelech Spira of Dinov (also known as the *בְּיַיִן יִשְׁשַׁכֵּר*) in his sefer *אֶגְרָא דְּכֻלָּה* (מסעי) says that *מִתְקָה* refers to things that are sweet and *חֻשְׁמִנָּה* means things that are elevated in stature. A prerequisite to elevating ourselves in Torah is that we need to cultivate a "sweetness", in our dealings with others and in our behavior.

Here is another prerequisite. *שם ישראל נגד הָהָר* in gematria is *לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת אָחִידָךְ* (ויקרא יט, יז).

Unfortunately, in our day and age we find certain schools of thought in the Torah world that look with scorn upon others. They tend to regard themselves as superior. Certain yeshivas that consider themselves superior to others, certain areas of study which are considered to be "more important" than others. In this shiur I have tried to bring the view that no area of Torah is more important than any other. They are all important, *all together* they comprise an integral unit.

How ridiculous would it be for your left arm to consider itself to be superior to your right leg, or your eye to consider itself superior to your nose. Just like a body cannot function optimally without a right leg, a left arm, an eye or a nose,

similarly the Torah is not complete with all the sub-parts from which it is composed. Only when all those parts are connected together in unity, as a single unit - is the Torah intact.

This is what precedes the Torah. וַיַּחַן שָׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגְדַד הָהָר, Am Yisrael in perfect unity, כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד בְּלֵב אֶחָד, treating each other with chessed and sweetness, with no traces of hate or disdain for each other.

We are instinctively drawn, with a kind of Ruach HaKodesh, to the part of the Torah that was destined to be the focus of our purpose in life. We must cherish and cultivate this natural attraction. This does not give us license, however, to neglect any other parts of the Torah. We must remain open and receptive to every branch of Torah, be it halacha, philosophy, musar, etc. and delve into the Torah in multiple directions, gleaning and harvesting from each the lessons that further our purpose in life. We must avoid polarization or stigmatization or any feelings that our focus of Torah is superior to others.

The Mishna juxtaposes שְׂבִיבָה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בְּמִהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְתֵן חֵלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתָךְ, because in order for the Mikdash to be rebuilt we all need to discover and pursue our own חֵלֶק בְּתוֹרָה, thus developing a passion and love for the Torah and communicating that to our children, so that they too may develop their own special relationship with the Torah.

This is the essence of Chag Shavuot.

In the language of the Mishna, הִיא רְצוֹן מִלְפָּנֶיךָ ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ שְׂבִיבָה בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ בְּמִהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְתֵן חֵלְקֵנוּ בְּתוֹרָתָךְ.

בבי"א.

Chag Sameach and Shabbat Shalom

Eliezer Meir Saidel

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