

More
Lag B'Omer pix
on pg 6



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Inside:

The Sound of Silence

by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Putting in the Effort

by Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

Parenting

by Rabbi Eli Mansour

and more...



RABBI YY JACOBSON
will be in town for Shabbos

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Ephrayim Yurowitz
Tzvi Blech



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
every 15 minutes from 1:30pm-5:00pm

8:08pm Candle lighting	7:30pm Mincha in tent א	8:18pm Chabad Mincha	8:26pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

4:45am Vasikin, followed by 2 Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑	8:00am Shachris 2 18 main	9:15am Shachris 3 Tent א	10:00am Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑	10:00am Shachris 5 18 main
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2:00pm Pirchei	8:05pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	8:27pm Shkiya	9:07pm Maariv 1	9:12pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
9:45 pm - 12:00 | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of May 26 - June 1

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	5:24am	8:15am	9:09am	10:25am	12:55pm	6:53pm	8:28pm
Monday	5:24am	8:15am	9:09am	10:25am	12:56pm	6:54pm	8:28pm
Tuesday	5:24am	8:14am	9:09am	10:25am	12:56pm	6:54pm	8:29pm
Wednesday	5:24am	8:14am	9:09am	10:25am	12:56pm	6:55pm	8:29pm
Thursday	5:24am	8:14am	9:09am	10:25am	12:56pm	6:55pm	8:29pm
Friday	5:24am	8:14am	9:10am	10:25am	12:56pm	6:55pm	8:30pm
Shabbos	5:24am	8:14am	9:10am	10:25am	12:57pm	6:56pm	8:30pm

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The Sons of Aharon

Several *pesukim* in parshat *Bamidbar* are devoted to the sons of Aharon.

“These are the generations of Aaron and Moshe on the day that Hashem spoke with Moshe in Mount Sinai.” “And these are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadav the first born, and Avihu, Elazar, and Itamar.” “These were the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed *Kohanim*, Elazar, and Itamar.” “Nadav and Avihu died before Hashem when they offered an alien fire before Hashem in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children.”

Were Nadav and Avihu considered the descendants of Moshe? How can they be the sons of both Moshe and Aaron? Why aren't the children of Moshe mentioned if the *pasuk* speaks of his offspring also? Were the children of Aaron born on the day of *Kabalat Hatorah*? In *pasuk* 3 it states again “these are the sons of Aaron” why is it repeated? In the next *pasuk* it tells us that Nadav and Avihu passed away by bringing a foreign fire. We know that already from *Chumash Vayikra*, why was that repeated here? “And they had no children” why was this detail added here?

Some of these questions can be answered by the *Midrash* that Rashi quotes. “Anyone that teaches the child of his friend Torah it is as if he gave birth to them”. Therefore, the Torah shows us that they in fact were considered the sons of Moshe on the day that Hashem spoke with Moshe on Mount Sinai. They were so close to Moshe and that they received the word of Hashem directly from Moshe and that made them into his children. This is the power of a Rebbe-Talmid relationship; it's a parental bond.

The Torah states they were sons of Aaron in two consecutive *pesukim* to correspond to the attributes that they received from Aaron either physically or spiritually. The first time it says Aaron is their physical father; the second time corresponds to the spiritual privilege of being a *Kohain* that they received from Aaron. What remains to be understood is the repetition of how the children of Aaron passed away, and the fact that they had no children. Why is that detail repeated now?

Nadav and Avihu were so close to Moshe and wished to emulate him in every way. They were very holy and impatient to become really close to Hashem. They jumped the gun and they brought a foreign fire in hopes of reaching that goal instantly. But what were they really lacking? *Chazal* tell us they drank wine, or that they determined a *halacha* in Moshe's presence. However, the laws governing this were taught only after the incident, so they were never warned. What did they do wrong?

The *Midrash* tells us that Nadav and Avihu were discussing that they believed they were greater than Moshe and Aaron and were wondering when it would be their turn to lead the nation. The Torah is teaching us that though they had every attribute of a leader to replace Moshe and Aaron they were lacking children, which also means students. The Torah's repetition, stating they had no children, is to fortify the lesson that no matter how great and pious a person is, he is found lacking if he did not give his teachings over to others.

As the holiday of *Shavuos* is upon us and we prepare ourselves for this momentous occasion we must truly understand that *Matan Torah* does not mean receiving the Torah; rather, it means “giving the Torah.” Each and every one of us has something to teach and by imparting wisdom to others, we ourselves can reach greater heights of Torah.



Ruth, Dovid HaMelech, and Shavuos

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

The custom is to read Megilas Ruth on Shavuos. Different answers are given to the question “what is the connection of Megilas Ruth to Shavuos?” One of the answers is that Dovid Hamelech descended from Ruth, and Shavuos is when Dovid Hamelech was *niftar*. I would like to share an idea that relates to this connection between Dovid Hamelech, Shavuos, and Megilas Ruth. The connection is based on a beautiful explanation from the Vilna Gaon on a *pasuk* in Megilas Ruth. The *pasuk* is talking about Ruth as she is trying to join her mother in law Naomi on her travels back to the land of Israel.

The *pasuk* says ותרא כי מתאמצת היא ללכת אתה. The simple translation is that Naomi saw that Ruth was trying very hard to join her. The Vilna Gaon interprets the word מתאמצת differently; instead of meaning “trying hard,” he says in means that she was struggling, meaning that when Naomi saw that Ruth was struggling, she knew that Ruth is sincere about becoming Jewish. From this the Gaon derives a profound lesson for life. When you are trying to go in a proper path and you meet up with struggle, you should know that this is a sign that you're really heading in the right direction. However, if things are going smoothly without any struggle, then be aware it is very likely that your path is that of the *yetzer hara* trapping you.

Dovid Hamelech went down in history as a *tzaddik* who had to struggle with things that no one else before did: whether it was the claim that he wasn't even permitted to marry into the Jewish nation, because of concern about his lineage, whether it was the fact that King Shaul wanted to kill him, whether it was that his own son pursued him to kill him, whether it was that his wife that was taken away from him, kidnapped with his children, whether it was that he was on the run hiding in the mountain and caves and then being cursed and shamed by Shimi Ben Gera. The list goes on, and yet instead of giving up and throwing in the towel, Dovid rose to unparalleled greatness and became the fourth leg in the Chariot of Hashem. He became the present and future king of Israel. He composed the Book of *Tehillim*, in which every person can find their own personal struggle, expressed in Dovid HaMelech's words.

As we prepare for Shavuos and the acceptance of Hashem and His Torah, let us appreciate the struggles that come with this acceptance. To rise to greatness, we need to remember Ruth's struggles and Dovid HaMelech's incredible courage to overcome all challenges and trust in Hashem even in the greatest darkness.

Through this, we will see the light of the Torah shine with the coming of *Mashiach*.

Men and Woman *Part II*

[Continued from last week, where R. Jacobson explained that men's brains are like compartmentalized waffles, as if they have a little filing cabinet for each topic, and women's brains are like spaghetti – every strand of pasta is intertwined and interconnected with tons of other pieces.]

This is why you will encounter the following scene...

A husband returns home after a day's work and decides that tonight he is going to be a good husband. After dinner, he sits down with his wife on the sofa and asks how her day went. "Wow!" the wife thinks to herself. "This is wonderful!" She starts sharing her day with him... The cleaners ruined my \$150 dress... Meanwhile, the husband is opening up the filing cabinet called "Cleaners." You can see the wrinkles on his forehead as he concentrates on her every word.

From that crisis, the wife moves to the fact that she doesn't like her job. Now the husband begins opening another cabinet called "Job."

Before the Job cabinet is fully opened, the wife moves on to discussing the fact that your sister insulted her at a recent bar mitzvah. Now the husband opens the filing cabinet called bar mitzvah.

But his wife is already discussing how you need more cleaning help... Open file cabinet called cleaning help.

"Yaakov is not happy in third grade," she says. Close the file cabinet of cleaning help. Open the file cabinet called Yaakov in third grade. The husband's mind is flying from topic to topic...

By now, his wife has been talking for two minutes and ten seconds, and has already explored 22 topics. And this is just the beginning. Opening, closing, opening, closing, file cabinet after file cabinet... And nothing can touch anything else.



Rabbi YY Jacobson

Now after four minutes, close to 100 topics have been discussed. And the husband is shaking his head to help him stay awake and alert. The only logical thing he can think of right now is to fall asleep. Within seconds, he is "snoring."

The wife, looking at her husband with a stone-walled face, cannot believe that such a romantic experience suddenly turned into a sleeping opportunity. She is hurt.

Little does she know that your snoring is an expression of your deepest love. The only other option he had, in the back of his mind, was to walk away, but he loves you so much, he decided that snoring was better. All he wishes is for his wife to look at him and think to herself, "The love of my life, my dearest and devoted husband..."

If you've laughed, or let out a smile once, or twice, there is a reason for that. Remember, Hashem created man and woman and they get married. There are many, many differences. Chazal state that marriage is like Splitting the Sea, no less than a phenomenal miracle. Perhaps now, you can appreciate in one way how that statement is true.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)
Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.



UFARATZTA

Torah Is Likened To Water

... Although one grasps [Torah] only in physical terms (i.e. *shnayim ochzin batalis* -- the law concerning "Two men who clutch a garment..." or "One who trades a cow for a donkey..."), how can it be that through study of such laws, one attains unity with G-dliness?

Yet, the Torah has been likened to "water descending from a high place..." [to a low place.] The water on the lower level is the same as it was on the higher level. Similarly, the laws of Torah, although they have "descended" to deal with ordinary physical situations, still consist of G-d's will and wisdom.

Thus, in studying Torah, one is united with G-d's will and wisdom and thereby with G-d Himself...

==== Excerpt of Tanya Perek 37. Lessons in Tanya, P520. Chabad.org

"Shlomo Hamelech said 3,000 Meshalim" -- proverbs. (Melachim Aleph Perek 5, Pasuk 12.) Chassidus explains that when Shlomo Hamelech learned a concept in Torah, he understood how this is just a mashal for a higher and deeper, more spiritual level of learning this concept. He was able to go up 3,000 levels above, so each concept was just a parable for the level above it.

=== Kabolás HaTorah B'simchah Ub'nimius ===



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If someone missed a day of *sefira* and is unable to recite the *brocha*, we have seen that it is possible that he can recite a *brocha* on behalf of someone else. But the rule of thumb is that one can only recite a *brocha* on behalf of someone else if he himself is also required in the *mitzvah*. Is someone who missed a day considered still required in the *mitzvah*?

The *Shaarei Teshuva* quotes a *machlokes* in the *poskim*. The *Pri Chodosh* was asked this very question, and rules that he is no longer considered required in the *mitzvah*, and cannot be *motzi* others. However, there are many *poskim* who maintain that he is still considered required in the *mitzvah*, and rule that he can be *motzi* others.

The *Pri Chodosh* explains that once he missed a day, and he can no longer perform the *mitzvah* of counting *sefira*, he is not considered required in the *mitzvah*. Once he cannot fulfill the *mitzvah*, he can no longer be *motzi* others.

The *acharonim* explain that the other *poskim* who do allow one to be *motzi* others hold that the person is still considered required in the *mitzvah*. It is just that he is unable to fulfill the *mitzvah* for technical reasons.

Halachically Speaking

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ruled that one can rely on the opinion that allows the *chazzan* or *rav* to be *motzi* someone else with the *brocha*. The *Har Tzvi* quotes a story where the *Beis Halevi* actually did so, and when he missed a day, he asked someone else to be *motzi* him with his *brocha*.

On the other hand, the *Sefardic poskim*, such as the *Chida* and *Kaf Hachaim*, follow the ruling of the *Pri Chodosh*, and do not allow this practice.

Permissibility to Save One from Shame

The *Shevet Halevi* and *Rav Moshe Halbershtam* add that when it comes to a *rav*, there is another possible heter. Since he may suffer embarrassment from the fact that he missed a day of *sefira*, to save the honor of the Torah, one can rely on those who allow him to be *motzi* someone else with the *brocha*.

Interestingly, this scenario of missing a day of *sefira* once happened to the *Satmar Rebbe*, *Rav Yoel Teitelbaum*. The *Chasidim* were very concerned that it would be embarrassing if he would not be able to count out loud, as was his custom. They went and asked a *rav*, who ruled that the *Rebbe* can continue to count with a *brocha*, and rely on those who allow him to be *motzi* someone else with the *brocha*. However, when they related this to the *Rebbe* he replied that he did not plan to use this heter. It is important for people to see, he added, that a *Rebbe* is also human and can miss a day of *sefira*.

Rav Moshe Feinstein even took this idea a step further and, as quoted in my father's *sefer*, *Darkei Moshe*, he allowed

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

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any *chazzan* to recite the *brocha*. He ruled that one can rely on those who allow him to be *motzi* someone else with the *brocha*, even if not a *rav*, in order to be saved from the embarrassment that he missed a day of *sefira*.

Allowance for a Rav to Recite the Brocha Without Being Motzi Anyone

Rav Moshe Halbershtam takes the concept of embarrassment even further. He adds that it is possible that a *rav*, who will be embarrassed by the fact that he missed a day of *sefira*, can recite the *brocha* even if he is not being *motzi* someone else. They explain that, in such a case, one can rely on the many *rishonim* who allow reciting the *brocha* if one misses a day of *sefira*, even if he is not being *motzi* someone else with the *brocha*.

Summary

In a case that an entire day of *sefira* was missed, one must continue to count, but must not recite the *brocha*. Preferably, he should hear the *brocha* from someone else. There is a *machlokes* if one can recite the *brocha* to be *motzi* others. Some allow it in a case that the *rav* will be embarrassed. Some allow it even in a case of any *chazzan* who will be embarrassed. Some allow the *rav* to recite the *brocha*, even if he is not being *motzi* others.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
- מסכת מועד קטן
- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

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“Hashem said to Moshe: Count every firstborn male of B’nei Yisroel from one month of age and up, and take the count of their names.” Why does the *posuk* need to repeat, “And take the count of their names,” when “count” is already said in the beginning of the *posuk*?

“וזאת עשו להם וחיו ולא ימתו בגשתם את קדש הקדשים אהרן ובניו יבאו ושמו אותם איש איש על עבודתו ואל משאיו” 4:19

“Thus shall you do for them so that they shall live and not die; when they approach the *Kodesh Kodoshim*, Aharon and his sons shall come and assign them, every man to his work and to his burden.” Why does the Torah need to repeat here that they should not approach the *Kodesh Kodoshim*, when it was already stated previously in *posuk* 15?

There are those *mitzvos* that are considered important, and all are happy to perform those *Mitzvos*, while there are other *mitzvos* that are perceived to be a lower form, and an embarrassment to perform them. One must know that all *mitzvos* are commands from Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and one should never say that any *mitzvah* is below his dignity. The great Moshe Rabbeinu, erected the *Mishkan*, and entered the *Kodesh Kodoshim*, and he himself was also the one who served Aharon and his sons, and bathed them and dressed them when they became the *Kohanim* – nothing was beneath him.

Thus, although Kehas was not allowed to be there when Aharon and his sons were covering the *Keilim*, the family of Kehas was not to feel that

they were doing something inferior, rather, “איש איש על עבודתו” – each person must be content with the job that he was to do for Hashem, for everyone who does the *mitzvos*, no matter which one it is, there is no embarrassment in it, for one is performing the command of the King, and there is only honor in that. (קול רם)

The name of a person is so important, for the name represents the *shoresh* of a person’s *neshama*. Each person has a different *neshama*, and a different objective. The Lashon of “ושא” means to raise – to elevate. Each person is supposed to take his name and elevate it. The Torah repeats that there should be a count of their names – to tell us that we must know that each individual has “his name”.

There is a job for him to do in this world, and if he fulfills his job, he is doing *ratzon* Hashem. One is not to look at his job, and decide that perhaps he does not see his job as an important one, and he wants to do another job. Each and every individual’s job is customized by the *Ribbono Shel Olam* just for him. One should never think anything in *avodas Hashem* is beneath him, for everything in *avodas Hashem* has great significance.

Each person must seek to be the best he can be. As we prepare for the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos* – for *kabbolas HaTorah*, we must strengthen ourselves in *Limud HaTorah*. One should not think that he is unable to reach great heights in Torah, and thus there is no point for him. For every person, on his own level, that is what Hakodosh Boruch Hu is seeking. May we be *zoche* to have a proper *kabbolas HaTorah*.

The Eleventh Commandment – Be Nice

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



Competition is good for business, as they say. The consumer gains, as he gets a better product, better service and other benefits, and companies get to polish up their acts; it’s a win-win. Or so it would seem.

Some businessmen realize early in their careers that making friends with their competition is also good for their businesses, giving them a breadth of knowledge and comradery that pays off in the long run.

This is all true if the competition is fair and honest .as well as friendly. But if one of the parties is less than scrupulous, or worse, then it can be a disaster.

Rav Yaakov was the Rav of a big shul. Next door to him lived the new *chazzan* of the *shul*. In less than a month’s time, the *Yomin Noraim*, the High Holidays would be upon us.

But each night, the new *chazzan* practiced his *nigunim* for the *Rosh Hashanah tefilos* in a loud voice. The Rabbi asked him nicely if he would lower the volume of his practice sessions as they greatly interfered with the Rabbi’s learning and preparation of his *shiurim*. But the *chazzan* demurred and even sent a note, quoting from this week’s *parsha*: when *Klal Yisroel* camped, they camped “*ish al machaneihu v’ ish al diglo*,” each one firmly entrenched in his own encampment, even though they were next to each other.

The *chazzan* said: “Not to worry, I with my *chazzanus*, and you with your *rabbanus* – let us both stand firmly entrenched and strong in what we do.”

The Rabbi suffered, but, unfortunately, night after night there was no change. No mercy.

On the first day of *Rosh Hashanah*, it was the custom of this *shul* that the *Rabbi* acts as the *shaliach tzibbur* for *Shachris* and the *chazzan* for *Mussaf*.

During the past month, unknowingly, the Rav had heard so many of the *chazzan’s* melodies that he sang these tunes during *Shacharis* – leaving the *Chazan* no alternative but to use the tunes again.

After *Mussaf*, the *chazzan* approached the Rav – How could you have done that to me, even unknowingly?

The Rav couldn’t help but think, “Wasn’t it you who told me: we each have our own territory, separate but equal? Well, I have *Shacharis*, and you, *Musaf*!

To each his own!”

This was just a story, a *mashal*; it probably didn’t happen, but we can all learn from it nevertheless.

When faced with the dilemma of whether to help a friend, a neighbor, a business associate, or to hurt them for our own personal gain, we should never, ever choose the latter.

What goes around, comes around, and our own actions will one day come back to bite us. That’s for sure.

We are one nation, one large family, and our Creator and Provider has more than enough goodness for all of His children to partake of.

Our job here is to be righteous and to be “*meitiv l’achriti*,” to be nice to our fellow man, whenever we can.

It is this closeness, this supportive and conscientious behavior that will storm the heavens and bring us all *yeshuos*, both personal and community wide!

Good Shabbos!



Everyone Counts

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig

“...according to the number of names...” (1:3)

Chazal refers to the fourth book of the Torah as *Sefer HaPekudim* – The Book of Counting. Presumably, this is because of the census found in this week’s *Parsha*. However, this is not the first census *Bnei Yisroel* took. We find a similar census in *Sefer Shemos*. What is unique about this census that *Chazal* would define an entire *Sefer* by it?

Counting can be used for two purposes. One purpose for counting is to combine individual elements as a group. The other purpose for counting is to give each of the different elements within a group its own identity, giving the individual the feeling that “he counts.” This is accomplished by focusing on each individual separately, rather than on the group as a whole. The purpose of the census found in *Sefer Shemos* is to unify the Jews as a nation following their exodus from Egypt. In *Sefer Bamidbar* we find the expression “*bemispar shaymos*” – “they were counted according to their names”. The reason for this is that the focus of the counting is to emphasize the individuality of each person within the group. Identifying a person by his name is a way of focusing upon his individuality. This expression does not appear in *Sefer Shemos*, for if the function of the counting is to unify the people as a nation, there is no need to identify individuals by name.

Very often when a person is part of a large group, he senses a loss of his individuality and self-expression. To compensate for this, he has a tendency to break away from the group. The message of the counting in *Sefer Bamidbar* is that there is room for individuality and self-expression within the confines of the group. Indeed, interpersonal relationships within the group can enhance individuality and offer the opportunity for self-expression.

This explains why the division of tribes and their banners are mentioned in the census of *Bamidbar*, and not in that of *Shemos*. The ability to identify oneself in connection with a particular tribe, and represented by a particular banner, further enhances a person’s sense of individuality.

112 DAYS



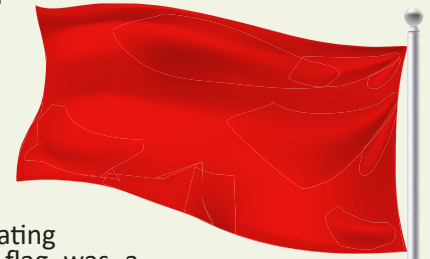
UNTIL UMAN



Twelve Different Flags to Unite a People

Rabbi Shalom Rosner

At the beginning of *Parshas Bamidbar*, we are introduced to the *degalim*, the flags that represented each of the tribes during their journey in the desert as they marched from *Har Sinai* to *Eretz Yisrael*. What is the significance of each tribe being designated its own unique flag? Wouldn’t it have been more befitting to have one common flag for the entire nation? It seems like a color war between the tribes.



Indeed, there is a danger to designating separate flags for each tribe. Each flag was a different color and had a different symbol. Each *shevet* possessed different talents and had particular goals. It can be very dangerous to have twelve groups that are each striving for something different. They could end up becoming twelve different nations, each with its own religion, customs, and observances. How is it possible to ensure that each element excels in its area and achieves its goals without creating a rift?

R. Yaakov Kamenetzky suggests in *Emes L’Yaakov* that the key is in the timing. If flags are so important, why then were they not assigned immediately after the exodus from Egypt? Why wait a year?

The safety net against dissolution is to have some type of common denominator, a spiritual glue, that unifies all of the tribes. Immediately after leaving Egypt, there was no unifying element. That is why the flag positioning did not start then. Only after experiencing the Splitting of the Sea, receiving the Torah, and building the *Mishkan* did the generation that left Egypt become a unified people. Now, with the Aron HaBris in the center of the encampment, they could each have their own flag, with a unique color representing different aspirations, without risking schism, because they were all connected by the Torah.

Just like a person has various organs that cooperate since they share one common body and one neshama, so too, the twelve tribes each serve a different function and carry a different banner – while sharing a common belief in the Torah.

People can differ yet be united if they share a common focal point. The center of the nation in the desert was the *Mishkan*. As long as each group’s practices are in accordance with *halakha*, it is acceptable and perhaps even preferable to wave a distinct flag – to have a different *hashkafa* (ideology), while respecting differing halachic opinions. With the Torah at the center, we can maintain our unity while expressing divergent opinions. thought, commenting on the *Gemara* at the end of *Ta’anis* (26b) which declares that in the future, *HaKadosh Barukh Hu* will make a circle for all the *tzaddikim*. They will dance around the circle, and they are all going to be pointing to the midpoint with *HaKadosh Barukh Hu* in the center. *HaKadosh Barukh Hu* is in the middle, everybody is pointing. But why dancing? Why not singing in a circle or standing in a circle?

The *Hafetz Hayim* suggests: When people dance in a circle, everyone rotates so that when one person moves, they step into another’s position, and the next person steps into their new position. The *Hafetz Hayim* says that that’s what’s going to occur in the future. Every point on the circumference of the circle symbolizes a different way of worshiping Hashem. This Rebbe’s *derekh* and Rav’s *derekh* are both points on the circle. We need all of them to complete the circle and to realize that we are all equidistant from the midpoint. While dancing, we will step into the other’s position, experience the other’s *avodas Hashem*, and realize that there are other legitimate ways of serving *HaKadosh Barukh Hu*.

That is the same idea of the flags in the desert. The Aron is in the middle surrounded by all of *Klal Yisrael* involved in their respective *avoda*. May we always be proud of our *hashkafa* and wave our flag while being respectful of other *halakhic* opinions so that we can maintain one unified nation.

Soldiers in Hashem's Army

Rabbi Mordechai Willig

Parshas Bamidbar describes the encampment of *Am Yisrael*, "Each man at his camp and his banner according to their legions" (1:52). The special roles of the *Leviim* and the *Kohanim* are emphasized. One who is not a Levi who performs the service of a Levi is liable to a heavenly imposed death penalty (Rashi 1:51). Even a Levi who performs a service of a different Levi, such as one who watches instead of singing, is liable (Arachin 11b).

Indeed, the term "legion" (*tzava*) indicates that each man is a soldier in Hashem's army. One who abandons his post, even if he assumes a different one, is subject to court-martial and punishment. By contrast, one who serves in the army properly is rewarded even if he performs a supporting role and does not serve on the front lines (Rashi, Bereishis 14:24). "Like the portion (*cheilek*) of the one who went into battle, so is the portion of the one who remained with the baggage" (Shmuel 1 30:24).

"May the *Beis Hamikdash* be rebuilt speedily in our days and grant us our portion in your Torah" (*Avos* 5:24). This phrase, which is recited after *shemone esrei*, appears to be a non sequitur containing two seemingly unrelated requests.

Perhaps the connection lies in the world *chelkeinu*, our portion. We all realize that we have different roles in the *Beis Hamikdash*. So too, we have different roles concerning Torah. Here too, the army metaphor is apt. Those who are involved in the war (*milchamta*) of Torah are soldiers on the front lines. Those in supporting and enabling roles are equally loyal servants and are entitled to equal reward.

In fact, Chazal teach that financial supporters of Torah receive reward equal to that of those who learn Torah. "In the shade of wisdom, in the shade of money" (*Koheles* 7:12).

One who supports a talmid chacham has an equal share in the world to come (*Koheles Rabbah*, *Pesachim* 53b with Maharsha). Indeed, supporters of Torah precede those who learn Torah (*Devarim* 33:18), perhaps indicating that they merit even greater reward (*Vayikra Rabbah* 25:1). Similarly, women are rewarded for enabling their husbands and sons to learn Torah. Here, too, their reward is greater (*Berachos* 17a).

"Torah is the tree of life for those who grasp it" (*Mishlei* 3:18). Had it said, "those who toil in it" there would be no *tekuma*, no way for many to stand. One must uphold the Torah, not necessarily toil in it, in order to avoid a curse (*Devarim* 27:26, *Vayikra Rabbah* 25:1). A wealthy man who learns Torah but does not support others is not fulfilling his role in Hashem's army. Women are exempted from intensive Torah study so that they can better exercise their primary role in enabling their sons and husbands to learn Torah (*Igros Moshe Orach Chaim* 4:49).

The opening line of the *Mesilas Yesharim* demands that every person determine clearly and truthfully what is his duty in his world. Every person lives in a world of his own, with his own set of unique talents and circumstances. He must discharge his obligation in his world, and not that of another. Hashem places everyone in a fierce battle in this world. If he wins a total victory, he will earn immense reward in the world to come (*Mesilas Yesharim* Chapter 1). Again we find the metaphor of a soldier in battle who must properly fulfill his own unique role in Hashem's army.

May all of us be blessed to correctly determine our duties in our world and discharge them properly. By fulfilling our own respective portions in Torah, we will merit the rebuilding of the *Beis Hamikdash*, speedily in our days.



Parenting Rabbi Eli Mansour

The Torah in *Parashat Bamidbar* briefly recounts the death of Nadav and Abihu, Aharon's two older sons: "Nadav and Abihu died before God... and they had no children." (3:4). The *Gemara* in *Masechet Yevamot* interprets this verse to mean that Nadav and Abihu died because they did not beget children. On this basis, the *Gemara* establishes that one who does not involve himself in *pirya ve'ribya* – the *mitzva* of begetting children – is liable to death, just as Nadav and Abihu died because of their refusal to have children.

The commentators raise the question as to how the *Gemara* can attribute Nadav and Abihu's death to their decision not to have children. After all, the Torah, right here in this *pasuk*, states explicitly that they died on account of their irreverence toward the *Mishkan*, for bringing an unwarranted offering. And the *Midrash* gives other reasons for their untimely death – drinking wine before entering the *Mishkan*, and acting disrespectfully toward Moshe and

Aharon. How, then, are we to understand the *Gemara's* comment that Nadav and Abihu died because of their decision not to beget children?

The Hatam Sofer (Rabbi Moshe Sofer of Pressburg, 1762-1839) explained that Nadav and Abihu's refusal to have children is the root cause of their other sins, which all have to do with a lack of respect. The irreverence they showed toward Moshe and Aharon and toward the *Mishkan* was the result of their failure to cultivate proper *Middot* (character traits) – a failure which could have been averted if they had begotten children. Parenting, the Hatam Sofer says, is the most effective means of perfecting one's character. Children look to their parents as examples to follow, and thus parents have no choice but to be careful how they speak and act. Keenly aware of the effect our behavior has on our children's character development, we are forced to conduct ourselves in a dignified, respectful and becoming manner.



THE SOUND OF SILENCE

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ztz"l



There is a spiritual reason that the Torah was given in the desert. The desert is a place of silence. There is nothing visually to distract you, and there is no ambient noise to muffle sound. To be sure, when the Israelites received the Torah, there was thunder and lightning and the sound of a shofar. The earth felt as if it were shaking at its foundations.

But in a later age, when the Prophet Elijah stood at the same mountain after his confrontation with the prophets of *Baal*, he encountered God not in the whirlwind or the fire or the earthquake but in the *kol demamah dakah*, the still, small voice, literally “the sound of a slender silence” (1 Kings 19:9-12).” I define this as the sound you can only hear if you are listening. In the silence of the *midbar*, the desert, you can hear the *Medaber*, the Speaker, and the *medubar*, that which is spoken. To hear the voice of God you need a listening silence in the soul.

Many years ago British television produced a documentary series, *The Long Search*, on the world’s great religions.[4] When it came to Judaism, the presenter Ronald Eyre seemed surprised by its blooming, buzzing confusion, especially the loud, argumentative voices in the *beit midrash*, the house of study. Remarking on this to Elie Wiesel, he asked, “Is there such a thing as a silence in Judaism?” Wiesel replied: “Judaism is full of silences ... but we don’t talk about them.”

Judaism is a very verbal culture, a religion of holy words. Much of Judaism is about the power of words to make or break worlds. So silence in *Tanach* often has a negative connotation.

But not all silence is sad.

The Sages valued silence. They called it “a fence to wisdom” (*Mishna Avot* 3:13). “If words are worth a coin, silence is worth two” (*Megilla* 18a).

The service of the Priests in the Temple was accompanied

by silence. The Levites sang in the courtyard, but the Priests – unlike their counterparts in other ancient religions – neither sang nor spoke while offering the sacrifices.

Our most profound prayer, the private saying of the *Amidah*, is called *tefillah be-lachash*, the “silent prayer”. It is based on the precedent of Hannah, praying for a child. “She spoke in her heart. Her lips moved but her voice was not heard.” 1 Sam. 1:13. God hears our silent cry, and hears our thoughts, even when they are not expressed in audible speech.

The silence that counts, in Judaism, is thus a listening silence – and listening is the supreme religious art. Listening means making space for others to speak and be heard.

There is the voice of history that was heard by the prophets. And there is the commanding voice of Sinai that continues to speak to us across the abyss of time. I sometimes think that people in the modern age have found the concept of “Torah from Heaven” problematic, not because of some new archaeological discovery, but because we have lost the habit of listening to the sound of transcendence, a voice beyond the merely human.

Is there enough listening in the Jewish world today? Do we, in marriage, really listen to our spouses? Do we as parents truly listen to our children? Do we, as leaders, hear the unspoken fears of those we seek to lead? Do we internalize the sense of hurt of the people who feel excluded from the community? Can we really claim to be listening to the voice of God if we fail to listen to the voices of our fellow humans?

From time to time we need to step back from the noise and hubbub of the social world and create in our hearts the stillness of the desert where, within the silence, we can hear the *kol demamah dakah*, the still, small voice of God, telling us we are loved, we are heard, we are embraced by God’s everlasting arms, we are not alone.

Strange as it may seem, parenting is not only about building our children, but also about building ourselves. We perfect our characters by being parents, as the role forces us to conduct ourselves in the way we want our children to behave. And so, the Hatam Sofer says, Nadav and Abihu died because they did not have children. Being childless denied them the opportunity to develop their characters and their sense of humility and respect, and thus indirectly caused their untimely death.

On Shavuot, we read the *Aseret Hadibberot* – the Ten Commandments that Bnei Yisrael heard at Sinai. The *Midrash* comments that the Ten Commandments are divided into two sets of five, and each commandment corresponds to the parallel commandment in the other set

Interestingly enough, according to this structure, the fifth commandment – honoring parents – corresponds to *lo tahmod*, the prohibition against envy. The *Midrash* explains that somebody who is envious of other people will have children who disrespect him and will show respect to other

people in their lives, instead, and this accounts for the implied link between these *mitzvot*. Why are disrespectful children the consequence of envy?

If children grow up around envious parents, who frequently speak of their desire to have what others have, then they, the children, will naturally become envious people. And it is then likely that they will be envious of their friends’ parents. If we cause our children to be jealous people, we may very well be causing them to disrespect us – because they will be jealous of their friends and show greater respect to their friends’ parents than to their own parents.

Parenting is a precious privilege and opportunity in many ways. One way we should not overlook is how it can help us to become better people. But this will only happen if we remember how much our behavior affects our children’s development, that the way we act directly impacts their characters. By being careful how we act and speak around our children, we not only help them develop and cultivate proper *middot*, but we help ourselves to perfect our own characters as well.

The Date Palm and the Cedar

Bring near the tribe of Levi and have it stand before Aharon HaKohen, and they shall serve him. (3:6)

Shevet Levi was consecrated to a life of service, avodas ha'kodesh, holy service, both in the Sanctuary and as Torah teachers. The Leviim set the standard for Jews to acknowledge and put into action: one does not live solely for himself. We are here to live a life of service – to Hashem and to the Jewish community. Concerning this pasuk (Hakreiv es mateh Levi), the Midrash quotes the pasuk in Sefer Tehillim (92:13): Tzaddik katamar yifrach k'erez ba'levanon yisgeh, "A righteous man will flourish like a date palm, like a cedar in the Lebanon he will grow tall." The Baal Shem Tov Hakadosh says: there are two types of tzaddikim: one is compared to a date palm; the other to a tall cedar.

Every waking moment of one type of tzaddik is taken up with serving Hashem. Regrettably, he is so involved with his personal growth that he is unable to "spread the wealth," to reach out and inspire others. He is likened to the tall cedar tree, strong and erect, but sadly non-fruit bearing. A tzaddik whose righteousness does not produce fruit, who does not inspire those around him, is still a tzaddik, and, by virtue of his presence in a community, he elevates its spiritual level. Nonetheless, he does not directly influence other Jews who are in dire need of his inspiration.

The second type of tzaddik is compared to a date palm, which flourishes and provides shade and luscious fruit. The tamar blooms and flourishes, things that serve the environment, while the cedar grows tall, implying its self-serve nature.

Horav Shimshon Pincus, z"l, observes a unique quality which is endemic only to the date palm: the height it achieves above ground coincides with the depth of its roots! In other words, the roots of a palm tree that is twenty feet high, are commensurately twenty feet deep into the ground. Rav Shimshon suggests that this characteristic is likewise delineated in the unique difference between men and women with regard to their individual achievements and greatness.

Man's greatness is achieved "above ground," externally manifesting his personality and erudition. Women are just as great, only they have mastered the built-in proclivity toward tznius, privacy/modesty. They do not require the public forum as do men. Thus, I think when we see a great, (spiritually) tall, tzaddik, we can be certain that there is an equally great and tall tzadeikes, righteous wife, who serves as his foundation, the roots that nurture and give him the strength and ability to maintain his height.

With this idea in mind, we might add to the distinction between tamar and erez: their wives, their foundation, rooted deep in the ground. It is most difficult to reach out, to challenge the strong winds of anti-Torah challenges that prevail. To help others, one must be firmly entrenched in his spiritual ground. He requires the constant support and encouragement of an eizer k'negdo, the helpmate who accompanies him throughout his life's journey. Otherwise, he might just grow tall – but there is always the danger that without a rock-solid, deep foundation, the tree/he could topple in a strong wind. Hebrew Academy of Cleveland

Putting in the Effort

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

The tribe of Levi was counted separately from the rest of the nation, and, whereas the rest of *Bnei Yisrael* were counted from the age of twenty, the *Leviyim* were counted from the age of one month. The *Midrash*, cited by *Rashi* (3:16), noted the logistical problem that this posed. Moshe turned to God and asked "How am I supposed to go into all their homes, and into all their tents, to know the number of their infants?" If even the young children were being counted, this meant that Moshe needed to go into every home to check how many children were there. Clearly, this was not practical.



The *Midrash* tells that Hashem replied to Moshe, "You do yours, and I'll do Mine." Moshe went to every Levite home, stood outside the door, and a voice from heaven announced to Moshe how many children were in the home. The *Midrash* explains on this basis why the Torah says that Moshe counted the *Leviim* "by the word of God." Quite literally, the *Midrash* states, this counting was done by God's words, as God told Moshe the number of children in each family in the tribe of Levi.

Rav Yisrael Meir Druk raises the question of why it was necessary for Moshe to go to each tent. If he in any event needed God to tell him how many young *Leviyim* lived in each tent, so why didn't he just stay home and receive the information there? What purpose was served by going to each home?

Rav Druk explained that the *Midrash* here is teaching us about the importance of hishtadlus, of taking initiative and investing effort. Of course, we believe that our successes and achievements depend solely on Hashem, and that nothing we do could ever succeed without His assistance. Nevertheless, Hashem created the world in such a way that we need to put in the work. Our parnasa is in His hands, but we cannot spend our days lying on the couch and expect Hashem to take care of our bills. Whatever it is that we need to get done, we must invest as much effort as we can, and trust that Hashem will fill in the blanks, that He will step in to do what we are incapable of doing. As the famous *Mishna* in *Avos* (2:16) teaches us, "You are not obliged to complete the work, but neither are you free to refrain from it." We have to do our best, and then rely on Hashem for the rest.

The *Midrash* relates that when Pharaoh's daughter saw a basket with an infant floating in the river, she couldn't reach it. She extended her arm, and then a miracle occurred, and her arm grew long enough to take the basket. This description aptly captures the message of *hishtadlus*. Our "arms" aren't always going to be "long" enough to achieve all that we want to achieve. But this does not mean that we shouldn't try. We must extend our "arm" as far as it can go, put in the work and effort, and ask that Hashem step in to extend our "arm" even further so we can reach our goals.



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The Book of Bamidbar Rabbi Berel Wein



The book of *Bamidbar* is, perhaps, one of the saddest, so to speak, of all of the Holy Scriptures. Whereas the book of *Shemot*, which records for us the sin of the Golden Calf also gives us pause, it concludes with the final construction of the *Mishkan* and God's Presence, so to speak, resting within the encampment of Israel. But the book of *Bamidbar*, which begins on a high note of numerical accomplishment and the seemingly imminent entry of the Jewish people into the Land of Israel, ends on a very sour note. It records the destruction of the entire generation including its leadership without their entrance into the Promised Land.

The narrative of the book of *Bamidbar* tells us of rebellion and constant carping, military defeats and victories, false blessings, human prejudices, and personal bias. But the Torah warned us in its very first chapters that "this is the book of human beings." And, the weaknesses exhibited by Israel in the desert of Sinai, as recorded for us in the book of *Bamidbar*, are definitely part of the usual human story and nature.

Over the decades that I have taught this book of *Bamidbar* to students and congregants of mine, invariably many of them have then asked me incredulously: "How could the Jewish people have behaved in such a manner?" I cannot speak for that generation of Jews as described in the book of *Bamidbar*, but I wonder to myself "How can so many Jews in our generation relate to the existence of the State of Israel in our time so cavalierly?"

How do we tolerate the cruelties that our one-size-fits-all school system inflicts on the 'different' child? How do we subject our daughters to the indignities of the current matchmaking process? How, indeed!?" And my answer to myself always is that for the great many of us, human nature trumps common sense, logic, and true Torah values. I imagine that this may have been true of the generation of the book of *Bamidbar* as well.

One of the wonders of the book of *Bamidbar* is that the count of the Jewish people at the end of the forty years of living in the desert was almost exactly the same as it was at the beginning of their sojourn there. Though the following is certainly not being proposed by me as an answer or explanation to this unusual fact, I have always thought that this is a subtle reminder to us that that no matter how great the experiences, no matter how magnificent the miracles, no matter how great the leaders, human nature, with all its strengths and weaknesses, basically remains the same.

It is not only that the numbers don't change much, the people and the generations didn't and don't change much either. Human nature remains constant. But our task is to recognize that and channel our human nature into productive and holy actions and behavior – to bend to a nobility of will and loyalty. Only by recognizing the propensity of our nature will we be able to accomplish this necessary and noble goal.

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JOKES

Lawyer Jokes

What's wrong with lawyer jokes?

Lawyers don't think they're funny and other people don't think they're jokes.

A local newspaper mistakenly printed an obituary for the town's oldest practicing lawyer. He called them immediately and threatened to sue unless they printed a correction.

The next day, the following notice appeared, "We regret that the report of Attorney Critchley's death was in error."

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing?

A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q: But could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

A: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

Useful words that ought to exist:

Crummox - Cereal bits in the bottom of the bag.

Fenderberg - Deposits of snow and ice that accumulate around your tires under the fender.

Flopcorn - Unpopped kernels at the bottom of the microwave bag.

Smart Dog

A little boy took his dog on a "take your pet to school" day. There were prizes for the smallest, the prettiest, the cutest, and the smartest pet.

Determined that his dog win a prize, the boy put his pet through a series of tricks. Finally, the boy turned to the dog and asked,

"Mindy, how much is two plus two minus four?"

The dog sat quietly, making no sound, remaining still and silent.

"Right!" exclaimed the boy. His dog won first prize.

Coffee maker

Cousin Elly, who happens to be blonde, is the world's worst at getting instructions mixed up. When she got married, her husband bought her one of those fancy electric coffee makers. It had all the latest gadgets on it.

The salesman carefully explained how everything worked: how she could plug it in, add coffee and water, set the timer, go to bed, and upon rising, the coffee is ready.

A few weeks later Elly was back in the store and the salesman asked her how she liked the coffee maker.

"Wonderful!" she replied, "However, there's one thing I don't understand. Why do I have to go to bed every time I want to make a pot of coffee?"

Guests

A Jewish couple won the lottery. They immediately set out to begin a life of luxury. They bought a magnificent mansion in Knightsbridge and surrounded themselves with all the material wealth imaginable.

Then they decided to hire a butler. They found the perfect butler through an agency, very proper and very British, and brought him back to their home.

The day after his arrival, he was instructed to set up the dining room table for four, as they were inviting the Cohens to lunch. The couple then left the house to do some shopping. When they returned, they found the table set for eight.

They asked the butler why eight, when they had specifically instructed him to set the table for four? The butler replied, "The Cohens telephoned and said they were bringing the Blintzes and the Knishes."



HA HA

BRAIN TEASERS

I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?

You measure my life in hours and I serve you by expiring. I'm quick when I'm thin and slow when I'm fat. The wind is my enemy.

I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?



Answers: 1. an echo 2. a candle 3. a map

Advertisements should not be read on Shabbos

ESTD 2019

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now is
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When the sun sets on their childhood, be secure in the knowledge that their fond memories won't fade with their tan. Having an Amish made, custom swingset as a fixture in their childhood, will provide hours of safe play and an eternity of warm memories.

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יום כיפור קטן
ערב ר"ח סיון
יום ה' פרשת במדבר
Thursday June 6

1:30 pm Tent ב'
2:00 pm Tent ד'
2:30 pm Tent ב'
3:30 pm Tent ב'
4:30 pm Tent ב'
5:30 pm Tent ב'
6:00 pm Tent ד'
6:30 pm Tent ב'
7:00 pm Tent ד'
7:30 pm 20 Upstairs
8:00 pm Tent ה'

יום עזרת נשים will be open

אסיפת הקהילות לבקשת הגאולה
עצרת תפילה

שליט"א רבי דניאל קורן

The entire community is invited
to a gathering with words of inspiration
followed by Yom Kippur Katan

יום ה' פרשת במדבר
Thursday June 6th

6:45-7:00pm

Tent ד

For women, women & children

We are proud to announce
Two intriguing Shiurim

Thursday Night

By *Rav Simcha Bunim Berger* שליט"א

20 Forshay, Upstairs

L'kavod Shavuos, Rabbi Berger will
be giving a special Shiur:

Making the most of Kabbolas HaTorah

דברי תורה מאת

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein שליט"א

Mara D'asra Kehilas Tiferes Mordechai, Cedarhurst

Preparing For a Kabbalas
Hatorah Like Never Before

Sunday, June 9

יום א' פרשת נשא

א Tent

9:00 PM

For Men & Women

Weekly

THURSDAY NIGHT
CHABURA

Enjoy an Inspirational Chabura
in an informal atmosphere

Hot food and
beverages
will be
served

ליל שישי | פרשת במדבר

This week's speaker:

Rabbi Yehoshua Weber שליט"א
Rabbi Emeritus of Ohr Tzvi, Clanton Park, Toronto

20 Upstairs | 10:15pm

Looking forward to seeing you:

Yudi Steimetz, Sklona Becker

לע"נ הבחור יששכר דוב בעריש ז"ל בן ר' שלמה נ"ו

Join us for our annual

Shavuos Lectures

with

Rabbi YY Jacobson

ליל שבעות TUESDAY NIGHT

1:00-2:30 am

The Power of a
Mitzvah

The incredible debate
between the Lubavitcher
Rebbe and Rav Yitzchak
Hutner zt"l

2:45-4:15 am

The Split in the
Torah World
Regarding Israel
And how we should
move forward

יום ב' ד'שבעות THURSDAY AFTERNOON

6:45 pm

Naomi, Ruth and Arpah
Walk into the
Therapist's Office...

20 Forshay Road
Tent ג

For Men, Women & Children

