



PRIDE of ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

SHABBAT MATTERS

4 Sivan 5781

May 15, 2021

Parshat Bamidbar
Numbers 1:1 - 4:20

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Candle Lighting
May 14 - 8:18 p.m.
May 21 - 8:25

Shavuot



Sunday May 16 at 9 a.m.

Shacharit service followed by Yizkor
LINK is found on the website in the box labelled
ZOOM ONLINE DAILY SERVICES



Sunday May 16 at 8:30 p.m.

Rabbi Lipson's Shavuot Night Learning
Viewing of the pre-recorded Shavuot Night Learning
can be set up on your computer, before Shavuot
to play automatically on Shavuot Night at 8:30 p.m.
LINK is found on the website in the box labelled
RABBI LIPSON'S CLASSES

Shavuot Family Learning

Prior to Shavuot, download the material
for families to discuss on Shavuot.

SHAVUOT CANDLE LIGHTING

Sunday, May 16	8:19 p.m.
Monday, May 17	9:29 p.m.
Holiday ends Tuesday May 18, Ma'ariv at	9:40 p.m.

PRIDE OF ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE
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WEBSITE: WWW.PRIDEOFISRAELSHUL.ORG

SHABBAT SERVICE TIMES
Friday, May 14 Shabbat, May 15
6:30 p.m. 9:35 p.m.

In-person services are suspended until further notice

WEEKDAYS
Shacharit Mincha
Wednesday - Friday 7:30 am Sunday, Wednesday - Friday 6:30 p.m.
Sunday and Stat Holidays 9:00 a.m.



TALKING TORAH

"PAINT BY NUMBERS MORNING SKY, LOOKS SO PHONY"

ROBERT HUNTER & JERRY GARCIA - TOUCH OF GREY

Frequently, numbers are more than just numbers. Frequently, numbers become a shorthand for a narrative. For the past year, we have grown increasingly aware of the asking 'about the numbers'. Regarding the Pandemic, we are concerned about numbers that tell us the rate of spread, the total number of Ontarians that received one vaccine, the total number of Ontarians that are completely vaccinated. Lately, we are focused on the number of new cases that will indicate an end to the current lockdown in Ontario. Numbers of course are not confined to the Pandemic. The number 6,000,000 is shorthand for the Holocaust. Unfortunately, there are those who look at numbers in order to justify their own bias or moral relativism. The current rocket attacks and violence in Gaza and Israel are a case in point. For those who see numbers as the narrative, at the time of writing this, stood at a death toll of 62. Fifteen children have died. One Israeli child, 15 Palestinian Gazan children. Hamas has fired over 1000 rockets over the last several days. When looking at the numbers, those living in Gaza have experienced more loss of life and more injury than those living in Israel. No, numbers don't lie. However, numbers also don't offer a complete explanation. So when the chief prosecutor for the ICC (International Criminal Court), Ms. Fatou Bensouda tweets: "I note with great concern the escalation of violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as in and around Gaza, and the possible commission of crimes under the [ICC's guiding] Rome Statute," then numbers have lost their original objective empirical value and instead have become a subjective tool for moral relativism.

The manipulation of numbers does not undo the

criminal nature of what Hamas has perpetrated with its numerous rocket launches. In fact, the only number that should matter to the ICC is the number '1'. If even one rocket launched by Hamas that targeted a civilian location, a crime occurred and Hamas ought to be prosecuted for perpetrating crimes of humanity upon both Jew and Arab. Any country that experienced just one such launching would be well within its right to defend its population and dismantle or destroy the possibility of any future launching.

This week, we begin reading the fourth of the five books of the Torah, Sefer Bemidbar, the Book of Numbers. This week's Parsha is the same name Bemidbar. The Book of Numbers is aptly named; the book begins with counting, the counting of people, a census. G-d commands Moshe to take a census, MiBen Esrim Shana V'Mala Kol Yotzei Tzava B'Yisroel - *of all males over the age of twenty, everyone who goes out in the Legion of Israel* (1:3). Once the number of fighting age males has been established by tribe, each tribe is placed in a specific formation around the Ark. This will be the formation in which B'nai Yisroel travels from the foot of Sinai to Eretz Canaan. Finally, in the Tribe of Levi, the Priests are counted. However because Levi's only responsibility is the Ark and the Mishkan; they will not be able to hold land in Eretz Canaan, nor do they fight. Rather they are now counted and assigned specific functions in terms of maintaining the Mishkan.

G-d ordered a census of people. However, for whom is the counting? Certainly, G-d is G-d and already knows the number of souls that comprise B'nai Yisroel as well as those able to fight. When G-d wants Moshe and Israel, or anyone for that matter, to do something for himself the language indicates it.

In the Book of Genesis, G-d commanded Avraham to Lech Lecha - *Go for yourself*. Later in the Book of Numbers G-d will command Moshe to Shelach Lecha send for yourself. Here in Parsha Bemidbar, the first parsha in the Book of Numbers, G-d commands Moshe to *Se'u et Rosh Kol Adat Bnai Yisroel* - count the heads. Since Lecha- for you does not appear; it would seem that the counting is not for B'nai Yisroel nor Moshe, but rather for G-d. So, why does G-d need or want a counting? We have already been told that B'nai Yisroel is Am Segula- *a treasured nation*. A "treasured nation", by definition, must possess some type of intrinsic value. Each individual has value and from that, each individual has a purpose. Parshah Bemidbar demonstrates that there is an intrinsic value in the individual. Halachically, we know this because the legal principle of Pikuach Nefesh, Saving a Soul exists. This principle appears in the Babylonian Talmud Tractate Shabbat, "*the saving of life supersedes the Sabbath*" (Shabbat 132a). There is a Midrash in Tractate Sanhedrin which expresses the individual's importance to G-d, and therefore G-d's desire to count us. "*If a human being stamped several coins with the same die, they would all resemble one another. But the King of kings stamps all human beings from the mold of the first person; and yet not one of them is identical to the other one. Therefore every individual has merit and is obliged*

to say "for my sake the world was created". (San4:5)

Indeed, numbers are important. Numbers are necessary to have a society remain organized. Governments routinely take a census of their population in order to understand demographics and political representation. It would seem that it is very easy to lose oneself and an individual's narrative amid all these numbers and statistics. Indeed, numbers can serve as a shorthand for understanding a narrative. Unfortunately, numbers can be manipulated to justify moral relativism and cloud the differences between good and evil. Each individual has a narrative, a code that allows survival. The same holds true for societies and nations. The numbers that are coming from Israel and Gaza speak of pain and suffering, fear, and terror. It is our sincere hope that the pain, suffering, death, fear, and terror ceases. Perhaps those that want to investigate the criminality of recent events in Gaza and Israel should be reminded that the numbers don't speak of the criminality; narrative and context do.

Peace
Rav Yitz



MAY IS JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH

In 2018, Parliament unanimously passed a bill proclaiming that throughout Canada, the month of May will be marked as Canadian Jewish Heritage Month, celebrating the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across the country. From law, to politics, to culture, to sports, this important initiative celebrates the contributions Jewish Canadians have been making to this country for 250 years.

For great facts and information, go to the Jewish Heritage Month website at www.jewishheritage.ca.



JEWISH EDUCATION

LUNCH and LEARN
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Go to www.prideofisraelshul.org

Click on the box "Rabbi Lipson's Classes"

Alternating TUESDAYS



TRAVELLING through TANACH Book of Samuel

See how the Tanach is a brilliant text that provides universal life lessons on power and relationships, as well as a deeper understanding of the Jewish People.



STROLL through the SIDDUR

Rabbi Lipson asks questions, offers insights, as he makes the ancient words relevant to our 21st century lives and souls.

THURSDAYS



WEEKLY PARSHA

Using commentary, Midrash, and current events, you and Rabbi Lipson will give the text greater personal meaning and relevance.

A sense of belonging, a friendly community, a place to call home and . . .

For information on other benefits of belonging to the Pride of Israel Synagogue, please email Judy Abraham, our membership chair at membership@prideofisraelshul.org or to speak with our rabbi, Rabbi Leslie Lipson, please call 416 226-0111, extension 205.



YAHRTZEITS FOR THE WEEK OF: MAY 16 - 22

Evelyn Abraham	Mother-in-law of Judy Abraham
Harry Balfour	Father of Beverley Kruger
Joseph Samuel Brown	Father of Noreen Simons
Raia Erdman	Wife of George Erdman
Max Freiberg	Husband of Esther Freiberg, Father of Ami Freiberg
Esther Gelber	Mother of Jack Gelber
Annie Blackman	Goldenberg Mother of Rita Goldenberg
Sarah Goldhar	Mother of Morris Goldhar
Harry Kirshenblatt	Father of Stanley Kirshenblatt
Nathan Mendrowski	Father of Lee Graff, Father of Florence Webster
Ida Pasternack	Mother of Erwin Pasternack
Sam Pinsky	Father of Irwin Pinsky
Sabina Pisarek	Mother of Irving Pisarek
Harry Pisarek	Father of Irving Pisarek
Arlene Robinson	Sister of Linda Heller
Mark Silverstein	Brother of Penni Levman
Meyer Warren	Father of Elaine Leff
Gordon Zaretsky	Father of Adelle Wall

MAY THE SOULS
OF OUR LOVED ONES
REMAIN FOR AN ETERNAL BLESSING



Self-Care Tips for Managing Stress and Anxiety

During these stressful times its important to prioritize self-care. Below are some useful tips to support your psychological health and wellness.



- Challenge worried or anxious thoughts. Use grounding techniques such as meditating or deep breathing to cope.
- Try to structure your day.
- Stay balanced.
- Build 20-30 minutes of exercise into your day.
- Limit blue light exposure before bed.
- Take a nature walk.
- Stay connected to co-workers, friends and loved ones.