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Sefira Reminder: Day 39 From: [sefira@torah.org](mailto:sefira@torah.org) This is a Sefira reminder for Friday evening, May 27. The count is: 39. Today is the 39th day, which is 5 weeks and 4 days, of the omer.

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<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/> Covenant & Conversation Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from

**Lord Jonathan Sacks** Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth  
<http://www.chiefrabbi.org/tt-index.html>

**Bemidbar 5769** The sedra of Bemidbar - "In the wilderness" - it is usually (though not this year) read directly before the festival of Shavuot, "the time of the giving of the Torah", when we recall the revelation at Mount Sinai. Indeed the opening verse refers to Sinai: "And the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai . . ." What is the connection between wilderness and revelation? The Midrash makes a psychological spiritual point: Anyone who does not make himself open to all [hefker, literally ownerless] like a wilderness cannot acquire wisdom and Torah. (Bemidbar Rabbah 1:7) The desert is neither public nor private space. It belongs to no one. It is completely exposed to the sun and the elements. So must we be - imply the sages-if we are to become the recipients of Torah. To hear its commanding voice we must listen with total openness, absolute humility. Torah speaks to the soul that has learnt the art of silence. The Egyptian-French poet Edmond Jabès (1912-1991) noted the connection between d-b-r, 'word', and m-d-b-r, 'wilderness'. For him, the wilderness experience is an essential and continuing feature of what it is to be a Jew: With exemplary regularity the Jew chooses to set out for the desert, to go toward a renewed word that has become his origin . . . A wandering word is the word of G-d. It has for its echo the word of a wandering people. No oasis for it, no shadow, no peace. Only the immense, thirsty desert, only the book of this thirst . . .

. (From the Book to the Book, 166-67) For Jabès, the Desert - with its unearthly silence and emptiness-is the condition in which the Word can be heard. There, between sand and sky, the unmediated encounter takes place between G-d and His people. There is something stark and austere about the wilderness, as there is about Judaism. In no other religion do G-d and humanity stand in such direct closeness, engaging in such frank and direct dialogue. Judaism is faith stripped of all accretions of myth - a faith that could only reach its full expression far from the diversions and distractions of urban or rural culture, in a landscape of lonely figures confronting the immensity of nature and hearing the Word from above and beyond. We are, Jabès implies, a desert people, never fully at home, never altogether satisfied, always thirsting for something that eludes us, never feeling that we have yet reached our destination. Judaism is the-word-as-wilderness and the-wilderness-as-word. For the prophets, the desert signalled something else - privacy, intimacy, a place where Lover and beloved go to be alone with one another. Jeremiah delivers one of the most beautiful lines in the entire prophetic literature. In striking contrast to the impression we receive elsewhere in Tanakh, that the Israelites in the wilderness were quarrelsome and rebellious, Jeremiah speaks of the love and trust of the people, willing to leave all they knew and follow the divine call: I remember the devotion of your youth, Your love as a bride - How you followed Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown. (Jeremiah 2:1) In an earlier age, Hosea used the wilderness as a symbol of the betrothal between G-d and the Israelites. G-d had 'married' the people, but they had acted unfaithfully. G-d would punish them. They would suffer disasters. Yet he could not abandon them, so great was His love. So, in an act of reconciliation, he would bring them back and renew their marriage vows in the wilderness, understood as a kind of second honeymoon: Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her. There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. There she will sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. (Hosea 2: 16-17) But there is a further, immensely significant dimension to the fact that the Torah was given in the wilderness. Israel, alone among the nations of world history, received its constitution even before it had entered its land. There is no analogy to this anywhere else. For every other nation, the land long preceded the laws. A people live in a certain territory. Gradually they begin to associate in ever larger groupings. They fight wars, build settlements, adopt leaders, develop a political structure, and then create a body of legislation to regulate their affairs. Nations develop organically like plants, with their roots in a soil, a landscape. In the history of Israel, and nowhere else, the nation received its laws in the wilderness, before it had even seen, let alone settled, the land. This is one of the great paradoxes of Judaism. On the one hand, the Jewish story is about the land of Israel. It begins with Abraham's journey toward it. It continues with a second journey in the days of Moses, with the family now become a people. Judaism is a religion of place: the holy land, the physical location in which the people of the covenant are summoned to create a sacred society based on justice and compassion, human dignity and freedom. It was to be stand in the greatest possible contrast to the great empires with which it was surrounded - nations predicated on demographic strength and military power, tyrannical regimes and hierarchical societies with absolute rulers and populations measured in the mass, not the worth of the individual. Judaism has a home, a place where it belongs. Yet most of Jewish history was spent outside that home. Abraham was forced, by famine, into exile. So was Jacob. Genesis ends with the patriarchal family in Egypt. Deuteronomy ends with Moses in sight of the promised land but not destined to enter it. Jewish history is a story of exiles - to Assyria, then Babylon, then the long series of

dispersions from the Roman conquest to the birth of the modern State of Israel in 1948. As Isaiah Berlin noted: 'It was once said by the celebrated Russian revolutionary, Alexander Herzen, writing in the mid-nineteenth century, that the Slavs had no history, only geography. The position of the Jews is the reverse of this. They have enjoyed rather too much history and too little geography' (The Power of Ideas, p. 143). This paradox is essential to Judaism and what makes it unique among the world's faiths. On the one hand, the G-d of Israel is utterly unlike the gods of the ancient world. He is not confined to this place, that nation: He is everywhere. Yet He is not remote, abstract. He has a home - or, to put it more precisely, He lives among a people that has a home. That is why Judaism is attached to a holy land - but at the same time it remains G-d's people even when in exile from the land. It is thus no accident that the Israelites received their greatest revelation - the moment that forged them into a nation - outside the land, Bemidbar, 'in the wilderness', the place that is not a place, just as Jacob received his two great revelations (the vision of a ladder stretching from earth to heaven, and the wrestling match with a stranger) in the midst of journeys, in places that were between: neither starting point nor destination. The giving of the Torah in the wilderness is an essential feature of Jewish history. Had the Israelites received the Torah in the land, it would be indissolubly associated with the land. Exile would mean the end of the covenant. It would make no more sense to keep Torah while in exile than to obey the laws of Russia while living in Spain. What made the G-d of Israel different was the fact that He was sovereign of the universe, not a local deity. That is why the Jewish people survived dispersion. Only the G-d of everywhere can be found and worshipped anywhere.

Why Money does not bring wealth JC 8 May 2009 There was a moment on the brink of the financial collapse last summer so symbolic that it could almost be a commentary on our times. At the end of July 2008, Damien Hirst put a sculpture for sale at Sotheby's. It sold for ten-and-a-half million pounds, one of the higher prices ever paid for the work of a living artist. Hirst called it the Golden Calf.

The irony was precise. What happened thirty three centuries ago among the Israelites in the desert happened again in our time. People stopped regarding gold as a medium of exchange, and started seeing it as an object of worship. The result, both times, was a collective madness. Adam bahu al mamono, said the sages, meaning, the pursuit of wealth can make us do irrational things.

It happened in the tulip craze in Holland at the end of the sixteenth century and the South Sea Bubble of 1720. The Florida Real Estate craze in the 1920s contributed to the Great Crash of 1929. Irrational expectation led to waves of investment, reinforced by rising prices, until the boom could no longer be sustained.

What happens at such times is that we forget the difference the value of something and its price. Nowhere was this clearer in the latest boom-and-bust than in the case of houses. The value of a house is that it is home. Hebrew combines both ideas in a single word, bayit. It's where we belong and where, if we are lucky, we raise a family.

At a certain point, though, some began to think of a house less as a home than as a tax-free capital investment. Value began to take second place to price. House prices began to rise. Even people who had no thought of capital gain were forced to join the race. They sought to borrow more, and banks and building societies duly obliged, devising ways to leverage loans ever higher.

Borrowings lost all proportion to average earnings. People, contemplating what they would get if they put their house on the market, thought they were getting richer, but in real terms they weren't. The value of a house is something altogether different from

its price. It was bound to collapse. No one with a long memory doubted it. Even in biblical times, Joseph knew that the years of plenty would be followed by years of famine: the first recorded reference to trade cycles. Worship of a golden calf always ends in tears.

What is fascinating, though, is the Torah's antidote. The story of the golden calf is immediately preceded and followed by a command, in both cases the command of Shabbat. The reason is profound.

Shabbat is when we celebrate the things that have value but no price. Husbands sing a song of praise to their wives. Parents bless their children. We take time to have a meal together with family and friends. In the synagogue we renew our sense of community. People share their joys - a new child, a bar or bat mitzvah, an engagement, a forthcoming wedding - with others. Those saying kaddish find comfort for their grief.

Shabbat, when we can neither buy nor sell, forcibly reminds us of the wise words of Ben Zoma: Who is rich? One who rejoices in what he has. A consumer society is based on the opposite: constantly reminding us of what we do not yet have. That is the reason for the paradox that affluence is not reflected in higher self-reported levels of happiness. True happiness means celebrating what God has given us, not what the market wants us to buy.

There is no minimising the pain of this recession. What is truly impressive about our community is that levels of giving remain high, and our welfare agencies are working hard to help people in need. The Jewish values of tzedakah and chessed are still strong, and being exercised daily.

The deep question about the financial and economic crisis is not, When will it end? but, How will we be changed by it? Judaism is not opposed to the market, but it has given us Shabbat to set a limit to our striving. Crises remind us of what really matters: family, friendship and faith, the things that have a value, not a price.

Work is essential to human dignity JC 15 May 2009

It was one of Maimonides' most penetrating insights. Listing the eight rungs of the ladder of tzedakah, he places highest of all one 'who provides someone with a gift or a loan or a business partnership or in some other way helps him find employment.' The highest degree of tzedakah, exceeded by none, he writes, is to help someone start a business or find a job.

In conventional terms this makes no sense at all. Usually we think of charity in terms of what it costs the person who gives. The more you give, the more charitable you are. But often it costs nothing to help someone find a job. Investing in a new business may even bring financial gain. Nothing more eloquently expresses the distinctiveness of Jewish ethics.

Tzedakah does not mean charity. The word is untranslatable since it means both charity and justice, two concepts that are, in English, opposites. If I give someone £1,000 because I owe him this sum, that is justice. If I give him £1,000 because he needs it, that is charity. In English the two cannot be combined. In Hebrew they cannot be separated. That is because in Judaism, we believe that what we have, we do not truly own. We hold it in trust on behalf of God. One of the conditions of that trust is that we share some of what we have with those in need. So in Judaism tzedakah is more than charity. It is a form of social justice.

Social justice means, among other things, caring for human dignity. So the laws of tzedakah focus less on the giver than on the recipient. Jewish law is intensely aware that needing help from others is not only a financial crisis. It is also psychologically traumatic. To lose your job is a blow to self-respect, an essential element of human dignity. So Judaism tells us that, wherever possible, we must try to minimise the embarrassment or shame.

We try to give not only generously but also anonymously, so that people will not know from whom they have received. That is why the highest form of tzedakah is helping someone find a job, because of all forms of assistance it is the one that most effectively gives someone back their independence, dignity and self-respect. The best aid, says Maimonides, is to help someone dispense with the need for aid. That should be a guiding principle for our community in the current recession.

It is a terrible shock to lose your job, however much you know that others are losing theirs, and that it is all the result of a global recession for which no one company or country is to blame. Work means independence, which is at the core of human dignity. Even in Eden, said the sages, God gave Adam the dignity of work, placing him in the garden 'to serve and protect it.'

That is why I particularly value the work of the Employment Resource Centre, run by JBD, and Train-E, Trade-E, both of which exist to help people find jobs, start new businesses, or learn new skills that will open fresh avenues of employment. These are organisations where you truly see Jewish values in action.

No one knows how long the current financial crisis or the economic recession, will last. We do know that it is taking a terrible toll. People are losing their jobs, their savings, and in some cases, their homes. Now is the time for us to act as a community. We can all help in some way, sharing our skills with others or offering financial assistance to those in need. Best of all, we can help them find work and an income and a recovered sense of dignity.

Every community should establish a group dedicated to this work, guided by its rabbi, making use of the talents and networking skills of people within the congregation. That was the greatness of Jewish communities throughout the ages. They knew that kol Yisrael arevin zeh bazeh, we are all responsible for one another, and they acted on it. Now is the time to put that principle into practice. God's gifts become blessings when we share them with others.

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On Fri, May 27, 2011 at 12:01 AM, Shabbat Shalom <postmaster@ou.2dialog.com> wrote:

**Rabbi Weinreb's Torah Column, Parshat Bamidbar  
Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**

It was November, 1938. Dark clouds were gathering over all of Europe, and particularly over the Jewish communities in countries like Poland and Lithuania. Although few foresaw the horrific extent of the Holocaust that lay ahead, everyone knew that those communities were in very grave danger.

One man, a teacher and leader of those communities, found himself in the United States at that auspicious moment. He was preparing to return to his responsibilities back home in Eastern Europe, particularly to return to his students at the yeshiva he led there.

His friends and supporters in the United States pleaded with him not to return. I personally was privileged to know one of those friends, Mr. Charles Fogel, who implored this leader to remain in the safety of the United States. He steadfastly refused. "I belong with my talmidim, with my disciples in the yeshiva," he insisted.

This leader's name was Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman, himself the foremost disciple of the Chofetz Chaim, the great sage of pre-World War II Europe, with whom you, dear reader, may be familiar from previous editions of Person in the Parsha. Rav Elchonon, as he was known to his many followers, already had many accomplishments to his credit, including several major published works and commentaries on the Talmud.

But Rav Elchonon's core pride and joy was the yeshiva he created for early teenage youngsters, preparatory to their going on to higher

institutes of Jewish learning. The yeshiva was known by the name of the town in which it was located, Baranovitch.

Rav Elchonon insisted upon leaving the safe haven in which he then found himself in order to return to that yeshiva and to those youngsters. He said, "I am their father, and they are my children. A father does not abandon his children." What was the source of Rav Elchonon's strong feelings? He had children of his own, some of whom were lost in the Holocaust, and some of whom survived to become teachers and leaders of a future generation. Why was he convinced that the students of his yeshiva were no less children of his than the ones who were his real offspring?

The answer to these questions is to be found in this week's Torah portion, Bamidbar. I note, parenthetically, that with this week's column I begin my third year of writing Person in the Parsha. I began submitting these weekly essays exactly two years ago this week, and I thank all of you for following this column, for your constructive feedback, and for sharing my ideas with others, especially with your own families around the Shabbos table.

"These are the offspring of Aaron and Moses at the time that the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai..." (Numbers 3:1). A simple verse indeed; so much so that you, my careful reader, might wonder what homiletic spin can be given to so straightforward a verse.

It is here where the words of an even more vigilant reader are so insightful. That "reader," of course, is none other than Rashi, who notes that although our verse promises to list the offspring of both Aaron and Moses, only Aaron's offspring are enumerated. Peruse the rest of the chapter as scrupulously as you wish, and you will find no mention of the descendants of Moses.

Rashi's answer is deep and powerful: Moses taught Torah to the descendants of Aaron. That made them his descendants, no less than the descendants of their biological ancestor, Aaron. In Rashi's own words, "He who teaches Torah to his friend's child is considered by Scripture to be a parent of that child."

Rav Elchonon took those words to heart, and he felt for his distant students, threatened by Hitler's clutches, what a father would feel for his children. Remaining behind in a secure sanctuary while his children were in mortal danger was inconceivable to him and completely out of the question. And so, he returned to Europe and met his ultimate fate in the Kovno ghetto at the hands of the Nazi murderers.

As powerful as this story is, there is a footnote which I was personally privileged to hear from one of those students, my own special teacher, my Rebbe, who survived the Holocaust and eventually did make his way to the United States. His name was Rav Shmuel Dovid Warshavshik, of blessed memory.

When the story of Rav Elchonon's heroism was told, my Rebbe would tell us that as magnificent as that heroism was, it was only part of the story. The rest of the story, Rav Shmuel Dovid would say, was that "we, teenage boys who were stuck alone in Baranovitch, knew that he would return. We were absolutely certain that he would not abandon us and that he would risk his life to rejoin us. We knew he considered himself a father, and we felt that way toward him. We were his children."

This is the secret of a great teacher. This is the root of all authentic pedagogy. The ability to instill in one's students the sense that they are cared for by the teacher no less than children are cared for by their parents. Students who are confident in their teacher's concern for their well-being are capable of the kind of learning that typified the students of those yeshivot of old.

It is a rare teacher that has that gift. Rav Elchonon was one of them. But Rashi assures us that, at least to some extent, "all who teach another person's child Torah" have the gift of becoming a teacher-parent.

I close this story, and this teaching from today's Torah portion, with a reflection on what might seem to be a different topic entirely, the topic of resilience. There is much being written in the contemporary psychological literature about what makes for resilience in people. Why is it that some individuals can endure great trauma, while others fall apart under less severe stress?

One of the surprising findings is that individuals who grow up to be resilient persons were childhood beneficiaries of people in their lives who were not necessarily their parents or close relatives, but rather, mentors or random acquaintances who, even for brief periods, showed them sincere concern and gave them well-intentioned encouragement.

The students of men like Rav Elchonon, and I speak of those who survived the Holocaust, were men of great resilience. The ones who I have been able to interview attribute that resilience to their master and to the sense of his making them feel special.

Few of us, perhaps none of us, are capable of the heroism and sensitivity of Rav Elchonon. But all of us are capable of occasionally approaching a young person in our synagogue or community and giving him or her words of sincere encouragement. You never know. You may be contributing to that young person's eventual resilience to the challenges of his or her future.

Parents must be teachers. Teachers can be parents. We all can be teachers.

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**Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items:**

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From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein  
<info@jewishdestiny.com>  
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

**Jerusalem Post :: Friday, May 27, 2011**  
**PEACE :: Rabbi Berel Wein**

There are many definitions of peace floating around in our world. Peace is a high priority value in Jewish life and belief. However there is a wide continuum as to what peace really means. The range of what constitutes peace begins simply with an agreement not to make war or practice violence against another. The ultimate extreme of peace is what is envisioned by the prophet Yeshayahu as the abolishment of weaponry and the closing down of any form of military training. Most of us currently would probably be satisfied with a peace that falls somewhere between these two definitions. This is an important issue that faces us – the definition of what we wish as peace. A temporary suspension of violence against Jews and the Jewish state, welcome as it always is, is certainly not the peace that we are searching for.

We would like to have a peace that is more long lasting and permanent and that somehow gives us a sense of confidence that we can sleep at night in security and protection. If however it is a temporary cessation of hostilities – again, welcome as such a situation always is no matter the circumstances – and only a precursor to a more deadly and aggressive war - only a temporary tactic and not a long term strategic shift, then this false peace is inherently aggressive and dangerous.

One need only review the armistice between the Allies and Germany after World War I to see the lethal effects of such a false peace. Twenty years later it unleashed the catastrophe of World War II upon humankind. The almost seventy year peace that has held in Europe after World War II is based on the realization of the German people

that Germany was annihilated in World War II and that its future could now only lie in cooperation and not aggression with the rest of Europe.

As long as peace, even in its most minimalist definition, is not a goal in the Arab world regarding its relationship to Israel and world Jewry generally, all negotiations, proposals, schemes, land swaps, etc. are essentially meaningless. The minimum peace that would be acceptable to the vast majority of people residing in Israel is not a matter of borders, Netanyahu and Obama notwithstanding, but rather it is a mutual agreement to live and let live.

We have long ago despaired in our time of the immediate prospect of Yeshayahu's peace being realized by natural here in the Middle East. But we are very wary of accepting temporary and uneasy quiet, interrupted by more than occasional violence against Jews, as being the desired goal of our policies and government. As long as our basic right to exist as a free and independent state in our homeland is denied it is difficult to see how a live and let live situation can now emerge.

And without that minimum definition of peace being realized it is foolhardy in the utmost to give up further real concessions on the ground in order to chase an illusory peace that has no solid definition. I know that this may not be welcome news to us who truly yearn for a peace that is at least live and let live. But we should realize that false illusions are very dangerous to our future survival. Better an uncertain but accurate reality than an imaginary rosy reading of a situation that is completely unreal and composed mainly of wishful thinking.

The Hebrew word for peace – shalom – is also in Jewish tradition known as one of the names of God, so to speak. This is because shalom indicates a degree of wholeness and completeness, a unity of which only God is capable of achieving. Peace, in this definition and context, is not merely the absence of war and violence, as important and vital as that is. It signifies a state of human existence where people can allow others to exist without threat and the necessity of conformity. It envisions a society where live and let live is the norm of human behavior and polity. It allows for a common goal of decency of behavior and service to God and man.

And, as the prophets have taught us, that “every nation may go forth in worship of their gods and Israel will go forth in the name of its God of Hosts.” We are a long way away from achieving this goal and state of peace currently. But traditional Jewish thought has taught us that people are not only judged by their actions – what they currently are – but also by what they wish to be – their ultimate goals. May He Who has established peace in His high heavens establish it here on earth for all of Israel as well.

Shabat shalom

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From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein  
<info@jewishdestiny.com>  
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

**Weekly Parsha :: BAMIDBAR :: Rabbi Berel Wein**

The parsha of this week, and certain portions of this particular Chumash as a whole, deals with the counting of the people of Israel. The traditional Jewish commentators always saw the repeated counting of the Jewish people, that we see in the desert as recorded in the Torah and later in the Land of Israel as well, as a sign of love. People always count and check up on their important assets, whether familial, social or financial.

Everyone checks on their financial portfolios and so to speak counts their money. This is such an inborn natural trait that the halacha, when it wishes to describe the necessary attention and care due to the recitation of the words of our prayer services, compares this level of care "as though one was counting one's money coins."

Naturally, counting people is far different than counting money or other inanimate objects. Every human being is different than anyone else. Our fingerprints and DNA are unique to ourselves as are our opinions, thoughts, character traits and behavior patterns. It is therefore imperative that the Lord alone order and supervise the count of the Jewish people. A purely human count will not truly reveal the diversity and human qualities embedded in the cold numbers that jump from the printed page of the Chumash.

Perhaps this is the message that Jewish tradition tells us when it warns us humans not to count people coldly and statistically purely by number lest a plague of troubles follow such a count. Counting people as identical creatures and thinking of them in that fashion always brings about troubles and tragedies both in personal lives and in national Jewish life as well.

Much is made of the disparity in numbers between the individual tribes of Israel. Some of the tribes have a very large population while others are relatively small in number. While the simple surface explanations to this phenomenon have to do with demographic patterns within families and groups, the rabbis always searched for deeper spiritual and supernatural reasons for these disparities. Much of this can be traced to the relative hardships that each of the individual tribes suffered during the centuries of Egyptian slavery and persecution. The tribe of Levi was pretty much exempted from the true horrors of Egyptian persecution - therefore, the blessing of the Torah that "the greater the persecution, the more those Jews became more numerous."

The tribe of Shimon still suffered from criticism of their behavior and their undue aggressiveness by their father regarding the incidents of Shechem and Yosef. Therefore their numbers were always small and the tribe itself as an independent entity practically ceased to exist after the Jewish people established themselves in the Land of Israel. The blessings of Yaakov to Yosef and the favored position of Yosef and his rise to power vis a vis his brothers enabled the combined numbers of the tribes of Menashe and Efrayim to far surpass those of any of the other tribes of Israel. Apparently many lessons and much guidance is tucked away within the seemingly dry numbers that are recorded in this week's parsha. Shabat shalom.

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From Shema Yisrael Torah Network

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To Peninim <peninim@shemayisrael.com>

Subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

### **Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum - Parshas Bamidbar**

#### **Hashem spoke to Moshe in the wilderness of Sinai. (1:1)**

The Torah emphasizes Klal Yisrael's presence in the midbar, wilderness, when Hashem gave us the Torah. The commentators focus on various characteristics of a wilderness which allude to the manner of our acceptance of Torah, its study and observance. I think the wilderness exemplifies faith and trust on our part, total abrogation of oneself to Hashem's leadership and guidance. The wilderness is empty and desolate. We "emptied" ourselves of selfhood to make room for Hashem. When Hashem called out to our Patriarch, Avraham, he responded, Hineni, "I am here" - ready and willing to do whatever You ask of me.

Two contrasting attitudes: Hashem was about to give the Torah. He first turned to the leaders of the various gentile nations and asked if they were "interested." They replied, "What is in it?" One cannot expect a nation of murderers to accept the Torah which has written in it, Lo Sirtzach, "Do not murder," as one of its basic tenets. A nation addicted to thievery is surely not going to give up its means of earning a livelihood just to accept the Torah. A nation to which fidelity and moral rectitude are extinct is not going to accept a Torah that highlights, LoTinaaf, "Do not commit adultery." The nations of the world begged off, gave excuses, none of which were justifiable; they were merely excuses. In short, they rationalized that the Torah and G-d, for that matter, were simply not for them.

The Jewish People, on the other hand, asked no questions. They adhered to the legacy of: Hineni! I am here! The words they used, their clarion response was, Naase v'nishma, "We will do and we will listen!" First, they accepted the Torah unequivocally. Then they would see how to adjust their lifestyle to accommodate Hashem's mitzvos. They were midbar, wilderness, people. Their trust in Hashem was all encompassing. Horav Yerachmiel Krohn, Shlita, notes the contrast between the number of mitzvos given to Klal Yisrael and the number given to the nations of the world. We have 613 mitzvos; they have seven. We have three mitzvos in common with them: idol worship, adultery and murder. That, however, is where the commonality ends. A Jew is enjoined to relinquish his life, so that he does not transgress these prohibitions. The gentile is not commanded to give up his life. The reason is that Hashem expects more from us. We declared Naase v'nishma. Living by such a credo, we can be expected to stand up for our mitzvos. It is our symbol of commitment. The non-Jews are enjoined, admonished, but not held in contempt if their life carries greater value to them than Hashem's mitzvos. After all, they were not inducted in the midbar.

Klal Yisrael's total abnegation to Hashem achieves expression in Parashas Beha'alo-secha (Bamidbar 9:15-23) concerning their travels and procedures pertaining to them. The Mishkan, which was a structure that had to be broken up every time Klal Yisrael changed encampments, is likewise assembled once the nation reached its Divinely-selected destination. The Torah relates that the Mishkan was covered with a Cloud. When the Cloud lifted off the Mishkan, the people waited for it to move over to Shevet Yehudah. The trumpets were then sounded and Moshe Rabbeinu would announce, "Arise, Hashem." Only then would the nation begin its next journey. When the journey reached its place of encampment, the Cloud would arrange itself over Shevet Yehudah. Then Moshe would announce, "Return, Hashem..." The Torah emphasizes that there were times when the journey was of considerable length, and there were periods when it was a quick trip of only a few days length. It seems superfluous to mention various examples of long and short encampments and journeys. The Torah is not short on space, but it is usually short on "words."

Ramban explains the Torah's focus on the journeys and encampments. Even if the Cloud remained for a long time at a place which was not to the nations' taste, they did not complain; they submitted to the will of Hashem. There were times when the people could have used a bit of a rest, hoping that their present encampment would have a longer duration. It was not up to them, and when the Cloud moved - so did they. At times, they remained in a place for barely a night. On other occasions, they would march through the night, and, in the morning, seeing that the cloud was stationary, they would begin to unpack. Unexpectedly, the cloud would light up and they were ready to move on - again. Sometimes, they would rest for two days and receive the signal to march on at night. Regardless of the situation, whether the command was to march at night or during

the day, the people acquiesced to the command, in spite of the difficulty it presented.

Imagine trying to live like this today. One cannot set out on a trip without an idea of where and when he is going to stop. Where will he get food? When we stop along the road, the first question that is asked is: how long are we remaining here? Order is a part of life. One cannot live out of a semi-packed suitcase today, but this is exactly how our ancestors lived in the midbar. They never questioned; they never complained. When the trumpet announced the next move, they moved. This mindset might have worked for the adults, but what about the children? How did they acclimate to the midbar? They did, because their parents did. They were Jews who trusted in Hashem. It is no wonder that Yirmiyahu HaNavi (2:2) lauds Klal Yisrael, Zocharti lach chesed ne'urayich lechteich acharai ba'midbar, b'erez lo zaruah, "I have remembered the devotion of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you did go after Me in a wilderness in a land that was not sown." The wilderness was Klal Yisrael's "school," their educational venue, where they learned the concept of emunah, faith, in Hashem. Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl, explains that our ancestors' sojourn in the wilderness was not a period of abuse and mortification by which they were forcibly inculcated with faith. It was an opportunity to study the harsh reality of life.

Serving Hashem is not an easy or a casual accomplishment. It is a constant upward, progressive grind as one toils through thick and thin to refine his relationship with Hashem, to develop a greater sense of faith and trust in Him. No, it does not come easily. One should not convince himself that he will first attend to his personal issues. They were always "on call" to Hashem. When he beckoned, when He moved the Cloud, they knew they had to pull up stakes and leave. There is no peace in this world for the righteous.

Klal Yisrael's tenure in the wilderness, their unequivocal trust in Hashem, is noted by Yirmiyahu HaNavi. Horav Chaim Shmuelevitz, zl, explains that the Navi is not merely relating to us the readiness of Klal Yisrael to suffer, to follow, to sacrifice themselves for Hashem. He is taking their trust and devotion a step further. He is declaring that Klal Yisrael's love for - and devotion to - Hashem were so strong that they were oblivious to the dangers that the wilderness presented. It did not matter what or who surrounded them. They were cradled in Hashem's "arms," such that they felt nothing but Hashem's Presence surrounding them. A child being held by his mother feels nothing but his mother's comforting presence. Where he is means nothing to him as long as he is ensconced in his mother's embrace. Klal Yisrael's disregard for the dangers inherent in the wilderness was not their hallmark. It was their awareness of Hashem's all-encompassing Presence, His eminence that engendered within them a sense of calm, a feeling of trust. They had nothing to fear - because Hashem would deal with it.

Rav Chaim applies this understanding of Klal Yisrael's relationship to Hashem in the midbar to explain a halachic difficulty. In the Talmud Shabbos 31b, Chazal raise an issue concerning the melachah, prohibited labor, of soseir, demolition. According to halachah, demolition is prohibited only if it is sosier al menas livnos bimekomo, demolition with intent of construction on the same site. If this is the case, how could the dismantling of the Mishkan be considered soseir? The reconstruction of the Mishkan took place elsewhere. That is why it was taken apart in the first place. Klal Yisrael was on the move! Chazal explain that since the Jews traveled and stopped according to Hashem's directive, "it was to be considered as if they were building on the same site."

What do Chazal mean? Rav Chaim explains that Klal Yisrael's physical locus was inconsequential. It was totally irrelevant, since they were completely bound up with Hashem and His directives. A child in his mother's arms is always in the same place, regardless of

the mother's movements. Likewise, Klal Yisrael was always in one place, embraced by Hashem. Rav Chaim's thesis teaches us a new concept of Kiddush Hashem, sanctifying Hashem's Name. One does not have to die for Hashem in order to sanctify His Name. Rather, by living oblivious to one's external circumstances, ignoring the vicissitudes of life that plague us all, is to live a sanctified life. This is what Hashem asks of us.

#### **Hashem spoke to Moshe in the wilderness of Sinai. (1:1)**

Chazal teach that the Torah was given through the venue of three media: fire, water and wilderness. Why were these three chosen? Chazal explain that just as these three are "free" to anyone who wants to acquire them, so, too, are the words of Torah available to anyone who seeks them. Alternatively, the wilderness is hefker, a place which belongs to no one in particular. Everyone has access to the midbar, wilderness. One who seeks mastery in Torah study must make himself like a wilderness, renouncing himself of materialism. The physical/material dimension plays no active role in the life of the ben Torah. It is all about Torah study as a lifeline, a source of sustenance, a tower of support. With Torah, everything is possible. Without Torah, we have nothing. This should be the prevalent attitude in one's approach to Torah study.

In the Talmud Yoma 35b, Chazal present us with a hypothetical situation in which each of three individuals comes before the Heavenly Tribunal to attempt to state his case for not studying Torah. Each one's excuse is refuted by demonstrating others who were in a similar predicament, yet emerged with complete devotion to Torah study. The poor person is queried: "Why did you not engage in Torah study? If he replies, "I was poor and preoccupied with my sustenance," he is challenged, "Were you any poorer than Hillel?" Chazal go on to describe how the great sage, who was just about penniless, would scourge and use his meager earnings to study Torah. When the wealthy man excuses himself for not engaging in Torah study, presenting the notion that he was preoccupied with managing his great material holdings, he receives a rebuttal, "Were you wealthier than Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom?" The great sage overcame all obstacles to study Torah. Last, is the rasha, one who is considered wicked as a result of the hold the yetzer hora, evil inclination, has on him. If he responds: "I was handsome and entangled with my evil inclination; thus, I could not learn," he is challenged, "Were you any more handsome than Yosef, who overcame the blandishments of Potifar's wife?"

The Shlah HaKadosh wonders why we question the rasha concerning his lack of Torah study. Certainly, there is much more that he could be asked. He should be asked first and foremost, "Why were you a rasha?" Simply, the answer to this would be that the rasha's negativity towards Torah study stands at the root of the sinful life. Had he learned, he would not have been a rasha. The Shlah explains that the rasha is not on "active duty." He is potentially wicked, possessing character traits that define him as a potential problem. He has not yet begun to act egregiously. Thus, when he is asked concerning his disengagement from Torah study, he replies, "I was very involved in my personal battle with the yetzer hora." He is shown that his excuse does not hold water, since Yosef Hatzadik prevailed over what might be considered a much stronger yetzer hora.

The Shlah begs to understand the basis of the wealthy man's excuse. "I was preoccupied with my holdings." He is challenged with Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom who had much more, yet devoted himself to Torah study. Why do we even respond to such a lame excuse for not studying Torah? "I was too rich to study. I was too busy counting my money" is essentially what he was saying. Does such an "exemption" warrant a rebuttal?

Therefore, the Shlah takes a novel approach towards understanding Chazal. He explains that this wealthy man is neither illiterate, nor is

he deficient in his mitzvah observance. He is a fine, upstanding, committed Jew, who happens to be wealthy. He has a daily seder, learning period, to which he adheres diligently. So, what is the problem? When he is asked why he did not apportion more time to Torah study, he responds, "I was preoccupied with my assets. I was making more and more money so that I could give more tzedakah, charity, to the poor, to support yeshivos and organizations that were in need. I did not just make money frivolously. I was amassing greater opportunity for helping others. Learning is important, but so is chesed. I devoted myself to acts of loving-kindness. Making money enabled me to do this."

Seems like an excellent excuse. The Heavenly Tribunal does not accept it. Rabbi Elazar ben Charsom was wealthier; yet, he made Torah study the primary focus of his life. The poor man attempts a similar ploy. He was busy trying to sustain himself. He sought very little, but a man must eat. How could he learn on an empty stomach? The Heavenly Tribunal rebuts with Hillel HaZakein who shared the coin he earned with the gatekeeper to the yeshivah. Half a slice of old bread and a day's learning made some sandwich!

Horav Sholom Schwadron, zl, extends this idea. It all depends on one's goals and objectives. Two wealthy men outwardly appear the same. Each one gives tzedakah, learns, observes mitzvos meticulously. One is a tzaddik; one is not. Wherein lies the difference? It is all in the "why." Rav Sholom relates an episode that occurred with a prominent chasid of Horav Aharon, zl, m'Karlin. As the chasid sat at the Rebbe's table, he noticed that a plate of apples was brought out. The Rebbe made a loud blessing and proceeded to eat the apple. The chasid mused to himself, "I am no different than the Rebbe: He eats apples, and I eat apples. He first recites a blessing, and so do I first recite a blessing."

The Rebbe, "perceiving" what was going on in the chasid's mind, commented, "Perhaps, you might have a point there. What really is the difference between you and me? We both eat apples and recite a blessing before we partake. There is an essential difference. 'It is the why.' An individual may rise in the morning, gaze outside and see a lush apple tree. He immediately is amazed by Hashem's wondrous powers to create such a verdant tree capable of sustaining mankind. Out of tremendous love for, and awe of, Hashem, the Jew seeks to praise the Almighty with a blessing: Borei pri ha'eitz, but he may not utter Hashem's Name in vain. So, he takes a bite of the apple. His goal is to laud Hashem. Eating the apple enables him to do so.

"My friend, you, however, have a desire for an apple. Being a devout, G-d-fearing Jew, you know that it is forbidden to partake without first blessing Hashem. So, you recite the blessing. Your goal, my friend, is to eat an apple. Blessing Hashem enables you to do so."

The analogy is quite clear; the lesson, penetrating and meaningful. There are those whose goal it is to earn money, to amass great wealth. They pay their Maaser, tithing, when applicable. There are others whose goal is to give tzedakah. To do so, one must have what to give. It is all in the "why."

**Take a census of the entire assembly of Bnei Yisrael, according to their families, according to their father's household, by number of the names, every male according to their head count. (1:2)**

The Torah details the results of the census of the Jewish People taken shortly after the construction of the Mishkan. Sforno notes a disparity in the text between the census taken here in the beginning of Sefer Bamidbar and the one taken some thirty-nine years later, as the new generation is about to enter Eretz Yisrael. Here the Torah adds that the census was, "according to the number of names," while later, in Parashas Pinchas (ibid 26:2), they are counted only according to their father's house. It seems that there is a marked difference between the two census, or, perhaps, the people being counted were of a different nature.

Sforno suggests that accentuating individual names emphasizes a person's importance. This is consistent with, V'eidoacha b'shem, "And I know you by name" (Shemos 33:17). Indeed, at that time, every member of that generation was designated by his name, which seemed as an indication of his character. Sforno is of the opinion, which he reiterates a number of times in Sefer Bamidbar, that it was ultimately the sin of the meraglim, spies, and Klal Yisrael's reaction that took down the nation. Had they not sinned, they would have gone into Eretz Yisrael much earlier, without having to wage war against its seven pagan nations. They would have abandoned the land of their own volition, circumventing an impending war in which they knew they were doomed. Since Klal Yisrael sinned, the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael intensified their egregious behavior during the extra years that the Jews wandered the wilderness. As a result, Yehoshua was destined to wage a long war against them. The purpose of the original census was to lead the nation into the land in an orderly and dignified fashion. Then they sinned, and history was changed. The generation that entered Eretz Yisrael were not counted by the number of their names. Only the heads of families and the number of men were mentioned. This generation paled in comparison to the dor de'ah, generation of knowledge, that had experienced the slavery and redemption from Egypt. While they certainly possessed great qualities, evidenced by the fact that they are counted by their "families" and "father's houses," individual greatness was not the norm.

Sforno's exegesis does not seem to coincide with the Torah's presentation of the foibles and shortcomings of that "superior" generation that left Egypt. Indeed, the Torah often goes into stark detail in relating their often negative attitude toward their leadership. On the other hand, there is no recorded rebuke of the latter generation. How are we to understand this apparent inconsistency? Nesivos Shalom attributes this disparity to the inherent greatness of the first generation. The more distinguished one is, the greater the expectation for continued greatness. Because those who endured the Egyptian experience with the ensuing liberation and its concomitant miracles and wonders were on a more elevated spiritual plateau, their yetzer hora, evil inclination, worked overtime and harder to get them to sin. The challenges which that generation confronted were fraught with greater danger. They had more to lose, because they possessed greater spiritual advantage.

This is a case in which being on a lower rung of the spiritual totem pole serves to one's advantage. The second generation, the children whom the members of the first generation thought lacked the spiritual fortitude to survive the pressures of the wilderness not only sojourned, but they entered the land their parents had shunned. We are still left with a difficulty concerning the generation that entered Eretz Yisrael. Were they really spiritually deficient in comparison to the previous generation? Nesivos Shalom explains that the difference does not lie in the spiritual status of the respective generations but, rather, in their individual and ensuing avodah, service, to Hashem. The first generation, survivors of Egypt's crucible, having been mired in the moral and spiritual filth that personified Egyptian culture, needed to purify themselves of the spiritual contaminants to which they had been exposed. Their avodah was one of sur mei'ra, turn away from evil. One who has been exposed countless times to infection must build up his immunity. This is done by resisting any venue that brings him in contact with the pathogen. The next generation was born into a different environment, a spiritual climate that was a far cry from the one which their parents called home. This generation had a different task before them. Their focus was to be on the proactive, asef tov, do good, performing good deeds whenever and wherever the opportunity arose. They were the ones charged with entering the land, "cleaning"

it of its defilement and, after making it their own, they were to build the Bais Hamikdash there.

Sur mei'ra and aseï tov are two very distinct paths to serve Hashem. Thus, they require two different mindsets. Bais Avraham writes that one who is focused on eradicating evil must possess extreme self-confidence. Yosef HaTzaddik exemplified this character trait. He believed in himself, knowing fully well the deficiencies in his life, understanding the hurdles over which he would have to triumph, in order to vanquish the yetzer hora. His response to Potifar's wife, "There is no one greater in this house than I" (Bereishis 39:9), was his way of declaring, "I can handle it." The yetzer hora uses an interesting ploy in its battle to impugn our spiritual success. It degrades us, calling to mind our previous deficiencies and sins, thereby painting us as "losers" who are worthless. "Why bother if you will not succeed?" is how the yetzer hora begins its litany. We can resist such a yetzer hora by asserting our value and rewarding our work. By convincing ourselves of our inherent greatness, we raise ourselves far above the yetzer hora and its blandishments.

Thus, the members of the generation that left Egypt had to gird themselves with pride, and animate themselves with every bit of success that they had enjoyed. It would be their weapon to ward off the yetzer hora's attack. Appreciating one's feeling of self-importance is how that generation fought back. This is underscored by the Torah's counting them by "number of the names." They were not arrogant; they had to act with pride, or they would fall.

The next generation focused on doing good. Positive avodah works best when one senses himself as lowly and humble. Humility mutes one's sense of self-importance, thus allowing him to submit himself to the needs of others. One who is full of himself has no room for others. Two generations - two approaches to serving Hashem.

#### **Va'ani Tefillah**

**V'hayah Hashem l'melech al kol ha'arets, bayom ha'hu yiheyeh Hashem echad u'shemo echad.**

**Then Hashem will be King over all the world, on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.**

Almost all nations of the world, with their multiplicity of religions, seem to accept the concept of a Supreme Being. They each have a different way of perceiving Hashem. His "Name" is different to different people. Except for the few idol-worshipping religions left in the world, all recognize Hashem but via different names. Each name attributes various powers and strengths, character and disposition, based upon the religious dogma of that specific religion. There are people and nations who believe in One G-d, but the meaning of one G-d varies in accordance with each religious perspective. This pasuk, says Horav Shimon Schwab, zl, addresses the time when the entire world will understand and perceive Hashem as we do. Then it will be Shemo Echad, His Name will be One. This means that there will come a time when the whole world will share our understanding of the One and Only universal G-d - Hashem Yisborach. May that day soon arrive.

Sponsored in memory of Mrs. Seliga Ahuva (Schur) Mandelbaum Seliga Ahuva bas HaRav Daniel a"h 26 Iyar 5751 "tenu la mipri yadeha v'hallelhah ba'shearim ma'aseha" by her family HoRav Doniel z"l & Shoshana Schur

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From Rabbi Yissocher Frand ryfrand@torah.org & genesis@torah.org  
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Subject Rabbi Frand on Parsha

**Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Bamidbar  
"Weighing Piety"**

At the end of Parshas Bamidbar, the Torah says, "Do not exterminate the family of Kehas from the family of the Levites. Thus shall you do for them so that they shall live and not die: when they approach the Holy of Holies, Aaron and his sons shall come and assign them, every man to his work and to his burden." [Bamidbar 4:18-19]. The Midrash Rabbah explains that the children of Kehas had the most prestigious job in the wilderness. The Mishkan [Tabernacle] was portable. Between travels, they disassembled it and transported all its component parts from one place to the next along with the people and the rest of their belongings. Whose job was it to transport the Mishkan? It was the job of the Levites. Some families carried the boards, some carried the curtains, but the family of Kehas had the very special job of carrying the keylim [vessels]. They carried the two Mizbayachs [altars], they carried the Menorah, they carried the Shulchan [Table], and they carried the Aron [Holy Ark], which contained within it the Luchos [Two Tablets of the Covenant]. One would think that the fact that they merited to carry the most holy items in the Mishkan would have been made them happy and everything would go smoothly in the carrying out of their duties. But human beings being what they are, the family of Kehas was not content to faithfully carry out their job and things did not go perfectly smoothly. They knew that there was a great reward associated with carrying the Aron and everyone only wanted to have that honor. When the time came to disassemble the Mishkan and gather up the keylim for transporting, fights broke out. Everyone started arguing "I got here first. It's my turn to carry the Aron. You carry the Mizbayachs. You carry the Menorah. You carry the Shulchan. I want to carry the Aron." It got to such a point that the Midrash says they abandoned the Mizbayachs, the Menorah, and the Shulchan and all ran to get the reward for carrying the Aron.

The result of this jockeying to take control of the Aron caused "kalus rosh" [flippancy] regarding their other duties and it brought shame and disgrace to the holy keylim of the Mishkan. This caused a desecration of G-d's Name. For this sin, they started dying. Therefore, G-d specifically charged Moshe and Aharon with seeing to it that the Children of Kehas not die because of their responsibility to transport the keylim of the Mishkan. A system had to be set up to avoid the conflict: Aharon and his sons will come and assign each member of the family with specific duties and specific items to carry. In this way, they would live and not die. Whatever it would take -- whether it be a lottery, whether it be by alphabetical order, whether it would be by rotation, a system needed to be developed so that there would no longer be these disgraceful fights when it came time to transport the Holy Keylim of the Mishkan.

In the Mesilas Yesarim, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato (RaMCha"l) discusses this Midrash in the context of a section on "Mishkal HaChasidus" [literally, weighing of piety]. Classically, Chasidus refers to a category of people who want to do more than the strict letter of the law requires (lifnim m'shuras haDin). The Mesilas Yesarim has two prior chapters on the importance of striving for this level of piety, in which he emphasizes that we should really all attempt to reach such a level of spirituality. In chapter 20, however, he writes an addendum to this advice and discusses the concept of "Mishkal HaChasidus". The RaMCha"l advises weighing when Chasidus of this type is appropriate and when it is not appropriate. In a person's zeal to fulfill "higher levels of spirituality than absolutely required," he should not do more damage than good by his actions. A person has to ask himself, "Is this the proper time and the proper way to act in such a fashion?" The RaMCha"l cites several examples of people who wish to go beyond the letter of the law, who in the process, ruin things.

Among the examples that the RaMCha"l cites is this story with the Levites. Why did they want to carry the Aron? It was because that

was the greatest mitzvah. That act had the greatest reward. However, in their zeal to be the most pious of the group, they caused Chillul Hashem rather than Kiddush Hashem.

Another example he cites is the mitzvah to rebuke our fellow man when we see him sinning. There is no denying that there is such a Biblical commandment [Vayikra 19:17]. However, many times a person will attempt to rebuke his fellow man at a time or in such a way that the efforts will obviously be in vain and will most likely be counter-productive. Many times, a person gives rebuke when it is inappropriate and when silence would be better. Such action is not Chasidus. It can cause desecration of G-d's Name. A person should not be a pious fool, but rather, he must use his intelligence and weigh the appropriateness of extreme piety in each situation. This is the idea of Mishkal haChasidus.

One of the most outstanding teachings of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement, was this very point -- to know when to be a Chasid and to know when being a Chasid is inappropriate. There are stories galore, which illustrate Rav Yisrael Salanter's attitude towards this matter.

In one story, a student invites Rav Yisrael Salanter to his home for a Friday night meal. The student boasted to his Rebbi that in his house, between the food and the zemiros [Sabbath songs] and the words of Torah delivered, the Friday night meal lasted for three hours! The student further boasted that at the same time, he had an added mitzvah because he hired the poor widow of a Torah scholar to be his cook and waitress. She thereby earned a livelihood from this job of serving during the Shabbos meal. When Rav Yisrael Salanter arrived at the house, he requested permission of his student to change the sequence of the normal Shabbos meal routine. Rather than drag out the meal for 3 hours, he requested that they eat quickly and then move on to the Zemiros and to the words of Torah discussion. The meal that night took only 45 minutes instead of the usual 3 hours. When it was time to say the Birkas HaMazon at the end of the meal, Rav Yisrael went into the cook and "apologized" for rushing the meal. The cook/waitress/widow responded, "I wish you would eat here every Friday night and rush along the meal like that. Do you have any idea how exhausting it is to cook all Erev Shabbos and then wait here until 11 or 12 o'clock to serve a dragged out meal while he sings every single Zemira from Kol Medash Shvii and on? Tonight was a pleasure. I will be able to go home and not feel like I am falling off of my feet!"

This is an example of "weighing piety". There is great piety in conducting a 3 hour Shabbos meal with plenty of Zemiros and Divrei Torah. However, when such piety comes on the shoulders of a poor widow, it is not really such pious behavior after all.

I am told that Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky used to rush through his Seder, the dictum of "Whoever exceeds in the telling of the Exodus is praiseworthy" notwithstanding. Rav Yaakov empathized with the exhaustion of the women who had prepared for Pessach and stayed up late the previous nights cleaning and cooking.

The premiere example of Mishkal HaChasidus is regarding davening for the amud on a Yahrzeit. In this situation, people lose their entire perspective of what "davening for the amud" is supposed to be all about. The intent is to Sanctify the Name of G-d. When one gets into an argument with someone about who has precedence to lead the congregation, it defeats the entire purpose of what he is supposed to accomplish for the deceased parent by leading the congregation in the service. One wishes to elevate the soul of his father or mother.

Instead, he makes a scene and gets into a fight with someone, insulting him and causing a desecration of the Name of G-d.

Once, when I was in a shul for Mincha during the Aseres Y'may Teshuva [Ten Days of Repentance], I heard a tremendous commotion at the back of the shul. Someone was pointing to the fellow davening

at the amud and yelling at the Gabbai and reading aloud from a sefer. I could not figure out what the problem was. It seemed to me that the person leading the service was doing an okay job. It turns out that the person at the amud was an Avel [mourner], and according to some opinions, an Avel should not lead the services during the Aseres Y'may Teshuva. However, regardless of such a concept, I can assure everyone that it was not worth making the fuss and disrupting the davening and talking during the repetition of the Shmoneh Esrei that this apparently "pious person" was doing just to achieve a degree of "Chassidus." It certainly did not fall within the concept of "Mishkal haChassidus" - weighing the appropriateness of piety in each situation.

A person must know when to be a Chassid and when not to be a Chassid... when to demonstrate their piety and when silence is preferable.

Transcribed by David Twersky Seattle, WA; Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman, Baltimore, MD

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From TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>

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### **Soldiers in Hashem's Army Rabbi Mordechai Willig (The TorahWeb Foundation)**

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 in 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 the Beis Hamidkash, speedily in our days.

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**Orthodox Union / [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org)**  
**Rabbi Weinreb's Torah Column, Parshat Bamidbar**  
**Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**  
**My Teacher, My Father**

It was November, 1938. Dark clouds were gathering over all of Europe, and particularly over the Jewish communities in countries like Poland and Lithuania. Although few foresaw the horrific extent of the Holocaust that lay ahead, everyone knew that those communities were in very grave danger.

One man, a teacher and leader of those communities, found himself in the United States at that auspicious moment. He was preparing to return to his responsibilities back home in Eastern Europe, particularly to return to his students at the yeshiva he led there. His friends and supporters in the United States pleaded with him not to return. I personally was privileged to know one of those friends, Mr. Charles Fogel, who implored this leader to remain in the safety of the United States. He steadfastly refused. "I belong with my talmidim, with my disciples in the yeshiva," he insisted.

This leader's name was Rabbi Elchonon Wasserman, himself the foremost disciple of the Chofetz Chaim, the great sage of pre-World War II Europe, with whom you, dear reader, may be familiar from previous editions of Person in the Parsha. Rav Elchonon, as he was known to his many followers, already had many accomplishments to his credit, including several major published works and commentaries on the Talmud.

But Rav Elchonon's core pride and joy was the yeshiva he created for early teenage youngsters, preparatory to their going on to higher institutes of Jewish learning. The yeshiva was known by the name of the town in which it was located, Baranovitch.

Rav Elchonon insisted upon leaving the safe haven in which he then found himself in order to return to that yeshiva and to those youngsters. He said, "I am their father, and they are my children. A father does not abandon his children."

What was the source of Rav Elchonon's strong feelings? He had children of his own, some of whom were lost in the Holocaust, and some of whom survived to become teachers and leaders of a future

generation. Why was he convinced that the students of his yeshiva were no less children of his than the ones who were his real offspring?

The answer to these questions is to be found in this week's Torah portion, Bamidbar. I note, parenthetically, that with this week's column I begin my third year of writing Person in the Parsha. I began submitting these weekly essays exactly two years ago this week, and I thank all of you for following this column, for your constructive feedback, and for sharing my ideas with others, especially with your own families around the Shabbos table.

"These are the offspring of Aaron and Moses at the time that the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai..." (Numbers 3:1). A simple verse indeed; so much so that you, my careful reader, might wonder what homiletic spin can be given to so straightforward a verse.

It is here where the words of an even more vigilant reader are so insightful. That "reader," of course, is none other than Rashi, who notes that although our verse promises to list the offspring of both Aaron and Moses, only Aaron's offspring are enumerated. Peruse the rest of the chapter as scrupulously as you wish, and you will find no mention of the descendants of Moses.

Rashi's answer is deep and powerful: Moses taught Torah to the descendants of Aaron. That made them his descendants, no less than the descendants of their biological ancestor, Aaron. In Rashi's own words, "He who teaches Torah to his friend's child is considered by Scripture to be a parent of that child."

Rav Elchonon took those words to heart, and he felt for his distant students, threatened by Hitler's clutches, what a father would feel for his children. Remaining behind in a secure sanctuary while his children were in mortal danger was inconceivable to him and completely out of the question. And so, he returned to Europe and met his ultimate fate in the Kovno ghetto at the hands of the Nazi murderers.

As powerful as this story is, there is a footnote which I was personally privileged to hear from one of those students, my own special teacher, my Rebbe, who survived the Holocaust and eventually did make his way to the United States. His name was Rav Shmuel Dovid Warshavshik, of blessed memory.

When the story of Rav Elchonon's heroism was told, my Rebbe would tell us that as magnificent as that heroism was, it was only part of the story. The rest of the story, Rav Shmuel Dovid would say, was that "we, teenage boys who were stuck alone in Baranovitch, knew that he would return. We were absolutely certain that he would not abandon us and that he would risk his life to rejoin us. We knew he considered himself a father, and we felt that way toward him. We were his children."

This is the secret of a great teacher. This is the root of all authentic pedagogy. The ability to instill in one's students the sense that they are cared for by the teacher no less than children are cared for by their parents. Students who are confident in their teacher's concern for their well-being are capable of the kind of learning that typified the students of those yeshivot of old.

It is a rare teacher that has that gift. Rav Elchonon was one of them. But Rashi assures us that, at least to some extent, "all who teach another person's child Torah" have the gift of becoming a teacher-parent.

I close this story, and this teaching from today's Torah portion, with a reflection on what might seem to be a different topic entirely, the topic of resilience. There is much being written in the contemporary psychological literature about what makes for resilience in people. Why is it that some individuals can endure great trauma, while others fall apart under less severe stress?

One of the surprising findings is that individuals who grow up to be resilient persons were childhood beneficiaries of people in their lives

who were not necessarily their parents or close relatives, but rather, mentors or random acquaintances who, even for brief periods, showed them sincere concern and gave them well-intentioned encouragement.

The students of men like Rav Elchonon, and I speak of those who survived the Holocaust, were men of great resilience. The ones who I have been able to interview attribute that resilience to their master and to the sense of his making them feel special.

Few of us, perhaps none of us, are capable of the heroism and sensitivity of Rav Elchonon. But all of us are capable of occasionally approaching a young person in our synagogue or community and giving him or her words of sincere encouragement. You never know. You may be contributing to that young person's eventual resilience to the challenges of his or her future.

Parents must be teachers. Teachers can be parents. We all can be teachers.

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### **A Thought for the Week with Rabbi Jay Kelman Parshat Bamidbar - Blossoming Desert**

The desert conjures up images of heat, hunger, thirst, wastelands and wandering, certainly not a place to stage important events. Yet we are all aware that it was in the desert that the Torah was given. The connection between the receiving of the Torah and the desert is underscored by the fact that we always begin Sefer Bamidmar - which details the wandering of the Jews in the desert - on the Shabbat preceding Shavuot. Why was such an inauspicious place chosen as the location for history's most important moment?

Perhaps the simple answer is that the Torah speaks for itself. The substance of Torah is much more important than its form. This point is especially important to remember in our generation where marketing plays such an important role in the world at large. More important than the product itself is the image that the product produces. While it often is (unfortunately) necessary to "market" Torah in order to reach out to non-traditional Jews this just reflects the superficiality of our generation. For one who understands the beauty of Torah no gimmicks are necessary. We are willing to go to the desert to receive it.

The desert also reminds us that the Torah must be observed irrespective of one's surroundings. For some people it is the struggle to earn a living which interferes with their ability to properly observe Torah while for others it may be the management of their wealth which serves as a barrier. Others are just plain too busy. Yet the Talmud instructs us that no matter what our circumstances may be, we must "koveah itim LeTorah" - set aside time to study Torah. Being products of our surroundings it is our obligation to create the proper environment which will enable us and our children to grow in understanding, appreciation and observance of Torah. This begins by living in an environment where Torah observance is encouraged, befriending those who share our values, and having a mentor who will help us to grow in Torah. This is so important, Maimonides states, that if necessary in order to prevent "moral decay" one must move to the desert to escape the corrupting influences of society. Man left to his natural instincts is often little better than an animal. We see this during war time - and Parshat Bamidmar enumerates the men who were to serve in the military - when murder, rape, plunder and looting are the norm. Similarly a mob of people can be worked into a frenzy acting in ways which would be unthinkable in a civilized environment. Even at the best of times man is full of lust, self centeredness, arrogance, jealousy and pettiness. This is normal. What separates man from animal is how he reacts to these feelings.

Does he succumb or does he have the fortitude to choose the path not of an animal but one which reflects the image of G-d? Jealousy typically leads to slander as we try to bring down others to our level. Eradicating jealousy is not realistic but challenging it for positive purposes is. Kinnat sofrim tarbeh chochmah (the jealousy of sages increases wisdom), our sages teach. Similarly, even if one's motivation in doing medical research is prestige and honour society is the beneficiary. In fact the Rabbis tell us that the evil inclination is a necessary ingredient for social progress. The drive for money leads to economic progress and the drive for honour leads one to pursue policies that will meet with society's approval.

A child is born, the rabbis teach us, with only an evil inclination. Infants care only for their own needs (many people unfortunately remain infants their entire lives). The inclination for good must be nurtured and developed. With proper love, care and moral guidance the self centered infant can grow into a sharing adult. Let us apply the wisdom of our heritage in all our endeavours so that the spiritual desert can bloom and bring forth fruit for generations to come.

Shabbat Shalom!

Rabbi Kelman, in addition to his founder and leadership roles in Torah in Motion, teaches Ethics, Talmud and Rabbinics at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

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### **Rav Kook List**

#### **Rav Kook on the Torah Portion BeMidbar: The Holiness of Sinai**

Our sense of holiness and closeness to God is not constant. There are special times when we experience a heightened awareness. These moments reflect a kedushat sha'ah, a transient holiness.

Also in the life of the nation, there are special times of kedushat sha'ah. This is the central theme of sefer BeMidbar (Numbers), which recounts Israel's unique experiences during their forty-year sojourn in the Sinai desert - a time when bread fell from the heavens and water spouted from rocks, a time of Divine protection and unparalleled prophetic revelation.

The book opens with the words,

"God spoke to Moses in the Sinai Desert in the Communion Tent...." (Num. 1:1)

The phrases 'Sinai Desert' and 'Communion Tent' are motifs repeated throughout BeMidbar. They call our attention to the special kedushat sha'ah of that generation.

Unlike Jerusalem's permanent holiness, the holiness of Sinai was temporary, for the duration of Matan Torah. Unlike the permanence of the Beit HaMikdash - a bayit, a permanent structure - the Communion Tent was provisional - an ohel, a tent. And unlike the 613 mitzvot that apply to all times, the mitzvot that God commanded the Israelites in the desert - how to encamp, the signal blasts, the order of transporting the Tabernacle - were only for that generation. One should not think that kedushat sha'ah is on a lower level than permanent holiness. On the contrary, it is precisely because of its lofty nature that this holiness cannot last forever. The deficiency is not in it, but in we who experience it. We are unable to maintain this level of holiness on a permanent basis.

One example of the temporary holiness of BeMidbar was the use of special banners for each tribe in the encampment. The Midrash explains that these flags were the result to Israel's desire to emulate

the angels. Angels appeared at Matan Torah in chariots bedecked with flags, and the Israelites desired to have similar flags. These flags represent the singular holiness of Mount Sinai and Matan Torah. They express the lofty holiness of angels, a holiness that the human soul is unable to fully attain.

Moses and Aaron

The dichotomy between temporary and permanent is reflected in that generation's leaders: Moses and Aaron. Moses served as the kohen during the Tabernacle's dedication - a priesthood of kedushat sha'ah that lasted one week. Aaron, on the other hand, commenced a lineage of kohanim for all generations. Even today, kohanim emphasize their connection to Aaron's permanent holiness in their blessing, 'Who sanctified us with the sanctity of Aaron.'

The foundation of the Jewish people required both types of holiness. They needed both Moses and Aaron, both kedushat sha'ah and kedushah la-dorot. BeMidbar was an era of Divine providence and miracles, the historic revelation at Sinai and Moses' unparalleled prophesy in the Ohel Moed. But it was also the time to establish the foundations for Israel's permanent holiness, to set down the Torah and mitzvot that would guide all future generations.

(Adapted from Shemuot HaRe'iyah 5689 (1929).)

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### **Weekly Halacha by Rabbi Doniel Neustadt "Carrying" on Shabbos Scenarios**

Right before Shabbos, one who lives in a community that does not maintain a proper eiruv is commanded to empty his pockets<sup>1</sup> of all items, so that he does not come to inadvertently carry on Shabbos.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is strongly recommended that during Shabbos one not put any item, e.g. a tissue or a key, into his pockets, since we are concerned that he will forget that the item is there and will inadvertently carry it outdoors.<sup>3</sup>

It happens, though, that people do forget and walk outdoors on Shabbos with something in their pocket. Perhaps one was under the assumption that the community maintains an eiruv only to discover that it does not; perhaps the eiruv was down for that particular Shabbos. Be that as it may, one winds up in a situation where even the slightest wrong move can have serious halachic consequences. No matter what one does, whether one stops abruptly or continues walking,<sup>4</sup> he will run afoul of a Shabbos desecration. In this Discussion, we will review some of the options discussed by the poskim as to the best course of action under the circumstances. Note that the halachos discussed in these pages, hotly debated among poskim, are extremely complex and confusing. What follows is an attempt to simplify a complicated matter, taking into account what would be most practical given our present lifestyle.

Question: What should one do if he discovers that he is carrying a tissue, etc., or an item of little value in his pocket<sup>5</sup> while walking in an area which is not enclosed by an eiruv?

Discussion: As soon as he discovers his mistake he may not stop walking for even a moment, and while continuing to walk he should

Option 1: Turn his pocket inside out until the tissue drops out and falls to the ground. [The same procedure is followed if he made a mistake and stopped walking; he may not start walking again until the item is released from his pocket.]

Option 2: Pick up his pace and trot<sup>6</sup> or run<sup>7</sup> back to his point of departure without stopping along the way at all.<sup>8</sup> If his point of departure is too far or otherwise not accessible, he should trot or run to the closest possible enclosed area (Private Domain) that he can find,<sup>9</sup> without stopping along the way at all.<sup>10</sup> But for this option to work, two conditions<sup>11</sup> must be met:

1. He must be sure that he never stopped at all along the way from the time he left his point of departure. If, for instance, he stopped at a red light or to wait for traffic to clear at any point along the way,<sup>12</sup> this option cannot be used.

2. He will be able to enter his point of departure [or any other enclosed area] without interrupting his walking. For instance, if he has a yard or a porch that can be entered without first stopping, or if his house is surrounded by an eiruv, or if there is somebody available to open his front door and allow him to enter without stopping, then he can avail himself of this option. Otherwise, this option should not be used.

Option 3: Locate an area classified as a makom p'tur, an Exempt (neutral) Area, and while continuing to walk, remove the item from his pocket and place it on the Exempt Area. An Exempt Area is any enclosed space over 11 inches high and smaller than 14 inches square, such as a fire hydrant, a parking meter, a small mail box on a post or an emergency telephone box protruding from a telephone pole. Preferably, the Exempt Area should be over 35 inches high.<sup>13</sup> But for this option to work, two conditions must be met:

1. The Exempt Area must be located within 7 feet of where he is standing when he realized he was carrying.<sup>14</sup>

2. The item must be placed in the Exempt Area in such a way that it can rest on it at least momentarily and not roll off immediately. If it will roll off immediately, then it is considered as if it was placed on the street.

Important Note: No clear consensus emerges from the poskim as to which one of the above three options is halachically superior. Each one of the three options is recommended by some poskim as being preferable to the other two.<sup>15</sup> What is clear, however, is that option 1 is by far the most practical, since options 2 and 3 are only viable when a host of conditions are present. It follows, therefore, that unless one is clear about all of the conditions pertaining to options 2 and 3 and is able to make the right decision on the spur of the moment, the best choice remains option 1. For that reason, we have listed that approach as option 1.

Question: What should one do if he discovers that he is carrying a wearable item, e.g. a yarmulke or gloves, in his pocket while walking in an area which is not enclosed by an eiruv?

Discussion: As soon as he discovers his mistake he may not stop walking for even a moment, and while continuing to walk he should

Option 1: Turn his pocket inside out until the item drops out and falls to the ground. [The same procedure is followed if he made a mistake and stopped walking; he may not start walking again until the item is released from his pocket.] He should then stop walking, pick up the item from the ground, put it on, and then continue walking. Under no circumstances may he don the item while continuing to walk.<sup>16</sup>

Other examples of wearable items that may be found in one's pocket and put on after stopping include the following: A scarf, ear muffs, a woman's rain bonnet, a large handkerchief,<sup>17</sup> eyeglasses, contact

lenses, a hearing aid, a gold wristwatch, a gartel, a tie, a hair or wig pin, braces and most kinds of jewelry.

According to some poskim, this option can be used for an inexpensive wristwatch<sup>18</sup> and a man's rain hat<sup>19</sup> as well.

Option 2 and Option 3 are available in this case as well. See Important Note in the previous Discussion.

**Question:** What should one do if he discovers that he is carrying money or a gold pocket watch [or any other valuable, non-wearable item] in his pocket while walking in an area which is not enclosed by an eiruv?

**Discussion:** In this case, where there is a possibility of monetary loss involved, the Rabbis were concerned that one may panic and carry<sup>20</sup> the money in a way which is clearly forbidden, possibly min ha-Torah. In order to keep this from happening, the Rabbis made some exceptions and permitted certain actions which are normally restricted mi-derabanan. The three options described earlier, with some modification, can be employed here as well, in addition to two more options as follows:

As soon as one discovers his mistake he may not stop walking for even a moment, and while continuing to walk he should

**Option 1:** Turn his pocket inside out until the item drops out and falls to the ground. [The same procedure is followed if he made a mistake and stopped walking; he may not start walking again until the item is released from his pocket.] He should then stay put and guard the money until Shabbos is over, or look around for a non-Jew who is willing to do so. If the non-Jew volunteers to deliver the money to his home or shul, he need not object. If the non-Jew cannot be trusted to guard the item, the non-Jew may be asked explicitly to bring it (the item or the money) to the Jew's home or shul.<sup>21</sup>

**Option 2:** When conditions are right, follow the same rules as detailed earlier in option 2 (run to original point of departure, etc). See Important Note in earlier Discussion.

**Option 3:** When conditions are right, follow the same rules as detailed earlier in option 3 (locate an Exempt Area, etc). Then stay put and guard the money until Shabbos is over, or look around for a non-Jew who is willing to do so. If the non-Jew volunteers to deliver the money to his home or shul, he need not object. If the non-Jew cannot be trusted to guard the item, the non-Jew may be asked explicitly to bring it (the item or the money) to the Jew's home or shul.

If none of the three options described above are feasible, e.g., one is in a dangerous neighborhood, or severe weather conditions make guarding the item until after Shabbos impossible, there are two more options that one may consider. As these options are halachically less desirable, they should be used only when the first three options are not viable:<sup>22</sup>

**Option 4:** After allowing the money to fall out of one's pocket to the ground, one should stop walking, pick up the money and place it inside his shoe, underneath his hat, or between his body and his shirt, and walk to the closest place where he would feel safe to leave the money until after Shabbos.<sup>23</sup>

**Option 5:** After allowing the money to fall out of his pocket to the ground, he should stop walking, pick up the money, walk less than 7 feet, stop walking,<sup>24</sup> walk less than 7 feet, and continue to follow this pattern until he reaches the area outside of his home where he may leave the money until Shabbos is over or ask a non-Jew to bring it in for him. If he is afraid to leave the money outside of his home until Shabbos is over and a non-Jew is not available, he will need to find a way to get it into his house in an unusual manner, either in one of the ways mentioned in option 4, or by kicking it into his house, or by throwing it over his shoulder into an open door or window.

1 Of both the clothing which he is presently wearing, as well as the pockets of any other clothing which he plans to wear on Shabbos.

2 O.C. 252:7. Even in a community that has an eiruv, one should check his pockets to rid them of any muktzeh items; Mishnah Berurah 252:55.

3 O.C. 303:17; Rama, O.C. 310:7. See Shulchan Aruch ha-Rav 303:23, Ma'asei Rav 141 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 310:22.

4 If he stops abruptly, he will be unwittingly completing the Labor of Carrying by performing hanachah, depositing in a Public Domain (or a Karmelis). Continuing to walk is also not a solution, since it is forbidden to carry in a Public Domain (or a Karmelis) more than four amos at a time.

5 Most of the halachos described below also apply when one realizes that he is inadvertently carrying an object in his hand.

6 Trotting or running is required so that one will remember not to stop until he reaches his destination; Mishnah Berurah 266:31.

7 Although running on Shabbos is generally restricted, here it is permitted since it is considered as if he is running for the purpose of a mitzvah; O.C. 301:1.

8 This option is based on the idea that by returning to one's original point of departure without stopping at all along the way, both the akirah (lifting) and the hanachah (depositing) are being performed in the same Private Domain, thus not transgressing the Labor of Carrying at all.

9 Rav S.Z. Auerbach (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 18, note 245). In this case, it is preferable to let the item drop out of the pocket in a backhanded manner; Orchos Shabbos 28:71.

10 It follows, therefore, that this option cannot be followed if going back to the point of departure or closest Private Domain would require stopping along the way for any reason, such as waiting for a traffic light, etc.

11 See Mishnah Berurah 266:36.

12 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 349:18.

13 To satisfy the first view quoted by Rama, O.C. 345:19 (see Beur Halachah, s.v. v'yesh) who holds that an Exempt Area in a Karmelis must be over 10 tefachim tall, as per O.C. 345:18.

14 Since otherwise it would be forbidden to walk four amos in a Public Domain (or a Karmelis) even if the hanachah will be in an Exempt Area; see Kitzur Hilchos Shabbos (Posen) 39:16.

15 See Nefesh Chayah, O.C. 5; Eretz Tzvi, 1:76; Igros Moshe, O.C. 2:112; Nesivos Shabbos 9, note 35; Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 18:59.

16 Igros Moshe, O.C. 2:112. See also Chazon Ish, O.C. 105:6.

17 See Mishnah Berurah 301:133.

18 Based on Igros Moshe, O.C. 1:111; Shulchan Shelomo 301:22-2.

19 Based on Chelkas Yaakov 2:100; Shulchan Shelomo 301:11.

20 Or do something else which is strictly forbidden, such as digging a hole in the ground and burying the money, etc.

21 Mishnah Berurah 266:37. In this case, the rabbis lifted the rabbinical restriction against amirah l'aakum.

22 See Chayei Adam 54:4; Mishnah Berurah 266:37.

23 Based on Mishnah Berurah 301:123. In this case, the Rabbis lifted the rabbinical restriction against muktzeh and against carrying in an unusual manner.

24 Some poskim recommend that he place the item on the ground as well. If it is difficult to do so, one may rely on the lenient opinions who do not require it; see Mishnah Berurah 266:18, Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 349:18 and Shulchan Shelomo 266:6.

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