



KINDER TORAH®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table

Parshas Bamidbar

Important Number

"Dovie, it's time for dinner."

"I'm coming Imma. I just have to finish counting the marbles in my collection."

"Dovie, didn't you count those marbles yesterday and the day before?"

"I sure did Imma. I like them so much that I never get tired of counting them."

"Dovie, you're a real character. You remind me of this week's parsha, Bamidbar."

"In what way, Imma?"

"In the very beginning of the parsha, Hashem commands Moshe Rabbeinu to count the Jewish people. The Medrash Rabba (Bamidbar 2:19) declares, 'Come and see how dear the Jewish people are to Hashem! He recorded the census of Jewish people four times! Additionally, he counted each of the four camps twice. He wants to count us all of the time, just like a person who owns a treasure that is very dear to him.' Dovie, you counted those marbles two days ago, yesterday, and again today. I can see that you really treasure them."

"I do Imma. Can I tell you something that we learned today?"

"Of course, Dovie dear."

"The Keli Yakar explains that one of the reasons for counting the Jewish people was to show our great importance. Every single Jew has *hashgacha prati* (private supervision from Hashem). Even one of us is considered a complete nation."

"Dovie, even the *halacha* recognizes the importance of counted things."

"In what way Imma?"

"Do you remember the time that a drop of milk fell into the chicken soup? The Rav said the amount was so small, we could ignore it and the soup was kosher. However, something that is counted is very important. If it falls in, we can never ignore it, no matter how small it is."

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How do important people act? With derech eretz (fine manners). They would never dream of speaking in a loud voice, or answering someone with chutzpa. Their clothes are neat and clean and they always try to keep their word. Guess what? We are all very, very important people. Important people like us whom Hashem loves very much would never even dream of misbehaving.

Prepare Yourself

Next week is Shavuous. We all want to prepare ourselves properly for receiving the Torah. The Medrash Rabba (Bamidbar 1:7) gives instructions. "Hashem spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert" (Bamidbar 1:1). Our sages explain that the Torah was given with fire, water, and in the desert. Why specifically in these three ways? Just as fire, water, and the desert are free for anyone to take, so the words of Torah are free for anyone to learn. Additionally, if a person does not make himself *hefker* like the desert, he will not be able to acquire the wisdom and the Torah. The "Matnos Kehuna" explains *hefker* to mean low and humble, to learn from everyone and to teach all who want to learn.

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Prepare yourselves. Shavuous is coming. If we prepare ourselves properly, we can receive the whole Torah just as we did at Har Sinai. We have to show Hashem how much we love His Torah. Then He will give it to us. Do as the Medrash says. Use these last few days as an opportunity to learn from everyone that you can. The words of Torah are free. Go on a shopping spree and take, take, take. B'ezras Hashem, He will give, give, give you kol haTorah kulah (the entire Torah).

The Center

"And the *Ohel Moed* (Tent of Meeting), the camp of the Leviim traveled in the middle of the camp" (Bamidbar 2:17). The Chofetz Chaim zt"l relates that the Sefer Torah was resting in the *Aron Kodesh* (Holy Ark) which was in the *Ohel Moed*. Therefore, the *Ohel Moed* must always be at the center of the camps. Just as the *bimah* (platform where the Sefer Torah is read) is always in the center of shul, and the *Eitz HaChaim* (Tree of Life) was in the center of Gan Eden. So too, the Torah is our tree of life, and it must be in the center with everything gathered around it. Similarly, the life force flows from our heart. Therefore, it is in the center of the body. It sends blood, which carries this life force to all parts of the body, and they all receive their energy from it.

In the last blessing of the Amidah prayer, the Torah is referred to as "Toras Chaim", the Torah of life. "It is a tree of life to those who hold it" (Mishlei 3:18). It is our source of life. Therefore, it must be placed at the center of our lives.

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When something is in the center, everything must go around it. How do we put the Torah in the center of our lives? Everything that we do should revolve around it. The halacha guides us in all areas of our lives. It tells us how to eat, how to speak, how to conduct our business matters, and how to treat our family, friends, and neighbors. Whenever we think about doing something, our first question must be, "How should this be done according to Torah?" There is a right and a wrong way to do everything. The Torah tells us the right way. When you put the Torah at the center, then everything spins around nice, smooth and balanced like a dreidel on Chanukah. Kinderlach put your "Torah dreidel" down and "spin to win".



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