

PARSHA INSIGHTS

Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aaron as follows, “The Children of Yisroel shall camp; each man in accord with his banner, according to the insignia of his fathers’ household.... (2:1 - 2)

When Hashem appeared at Matan Torah, He was accompanied by the Angels who were arranged according to their banners. When Bnai Yisroel saw this display, they said, “If only we could also be positioned by our banners.” Hashem responded, “You want banners - I will give them to you.” (Bamidbar Rabba 2: 3)

Many miracles took place during Matan Torah. What did Bnai Yisroel find so outstanding about the banners that they also desired it? Why did their request impress Hashem to the point that He promised them banners?

Behold! I have taken the Leviim from among Bnai Yisroel, in place of every firstborn.... (3:12)

The avoda was destined to be performed by the firstborn, however, when they worshipped the Eigel, they were invalidated. The Leviim who did not serve the idol were then designated in their place. (Rashi)

The Leviim were merely inactive by not participating in the idol worship. For being passive, why does one receive a reward?

The Yalkut Maamorim answers that it is true – one is not rewarded for inactivity. However, their reward was for having a clear mind and not becoming overwhelmed when disorder was reigning. Due to the Leviim’s ability to stay focused and not become influenced, they were rewarded with the avoda in the Bais HaMikdosh.

With this premise in avodas Hashem, the Mayan Hashovua answers the previous question as well. Every person has strengths and weaknesses. The secret to success is to utilize one’s strengths to serve Hashem and not serve Hashem with one’s weaknesses. It would be foolish for someone who is tone-deaf to try to make a living singing. So too, it is unwise for a person to try to serve Hashem with tools that he does not possess.

As Bnai Yisroel stood by Har Sinai, they saw myriads of Angels, each with his unique ability - one with the attribute of strength and the other with the attribute of kindness - each utilizing his distinctive strength to serve Hashem, thereby creating a complete panorama of people serving Hashem.

With this vision before them, they realized that amongst them there are also various strengths. They wanted that they also should be encamped according to their shevet (each shevet has its unique strength, as Yaakov told them before his death). Focusing one’s energy on his strength is the secret to success in avodas Hashem. Upon seeing their desire for clarity and not being confused in their purpose in life, Hashem granted them their desire to be encamped according to their banners. All the banners working in harmony brings total service of Hashem.

Now you appoint the Leviim over the Mishkan... they shall carry the Mishkan and all its utensils... and they shall encamp around the Mishkan. (1:50)

Command Bnai Yisroel and they shall expel from the camp... anyone who is tamei... (Naso 5:2)

A Levi who became tamei was expelled from his home? Is this how they lived their lives - becoming homeless whenever they became tamei? (Tashbatz 3:137)

The Meshech Chochmo answers that the “Camp of the Leviim” applied to two situations. 1) One who became tamei was expelled from the camp. 2) A person who accidentally murdered another person was able to find refuge in the “Camp of the Leviim” and be rescued. However, these two statuses were totally independent - a city could be a “Refuge City” for an accidental murderer and yet not have the status of being a “Camp of the Leviim” in regard to expelling a tamei. How is this difference explained?

Why was the “Camp of the Leviim” so holy that a person who was tamei was expelled? Its area was used to protect the Mishkan / Bais HaMikdosh, therefore, it received its sanctity from the Mishkan / Bais HaMikdosh (Meshech Chochma).

The section of the “Camp of the Leviim” that attained the higher level of holiness was the section that was used to guard the Mishkan / Bais HaMikdosh. However, the remaining section, in which the Leviim resided, was only considered a “Camp of the Leviim” in regard to being a refuge for an accidental murderer. Since it was not used to guard the Mishkan / Bais HaMikdosh, it did not have the higher level of sanctity.

TABLE TALK

PARSHA DILEMMA

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

Why specifically in the wilderness of Sinai? From here we derive that the Torah was given by way of three things, 1) Fire, 2) Water, 3) In the Desert. In fire as the posuk says, "Har Sinai was burning with fire", with water as the posuk says, "Also the clouds were dripping water", In the desert as the posuk says "Hashem spoke to Moshe in the wilderness of Sinai..." Why was the Torah given with these items? To teach us, just as these things are free, so too everyone is able to learn Torah. (Bamidbar Rabba 1:6)

Only one item was derived from this posuk, why does the Medrash say "From here we derive the Torah was given through three things?"

WHO AM I?

1. I pre-dated the World
2. I am written in black, yet I was a blue print
3. I am for all
4. I am named for Moshe

Last week's clues: I am walking, but your legs do not move, I am similar to water, I am to teach, I am for night and I am for day.

Answer: Torah

Congratulations to: Sorry no congratulations

WHO AM I?

1. I can cause a plague
2. Use money
3. For me some use a posuk
4. Don't confuse me with royalty

Last week's clues: I cause fires, I am not a log of wood, I unite nusach Ashkenaz and Sefard, I am glory of glory.

Answer: Lag B'Omer

Congratulations to: Dan Lowenthal, Sorah, Shifra & Naftoli Stoll

A GLIMPSE OF GREATNESS

...Every man to his work and to his burden. (4:19)

There was a wealthy man in the city of Brisk who refused to help the poor people of the city. The gabbai tzedoka approached the Rov, the Bais HaLevi, and asked him to speak with the man. The Bais HaLevi waited for an opportune time. After davening on Yom Kippur night, the Rov felt comfortable to approach the man.

The custom in Brisk was that the Torah scholars would remain in shul and learn until shacharis. The Bais HaLevi noticed that this man also sat down with them to learn. The Bais HaLevi approached the man and asked him, "Do you normally stay awake during this night?" The man answered, "No, but I know that saying Tehillim is a great merit and I am looking for merits to protect me on Yom Kippur." The Bais HaLevi posed the following question. "What happens to a soldier who deserts his troops and goes to fight alongside the enemy?" The man responded, "They will kill him for treason." The Bais HaLevi continued, "If he remains with his troops but changes from the cavalry division to the tank division without consulting the

commanding officer - will he be punished?" Again the man answered, "He is endangering the army by not serving in his post and will also be tried for treason."

The Bais Halevi continued, "I asked you these questions for the following reason. Tomorrow is Judgment Day and we all want to merit a good judgment. Hashem has given us our strengths and abilities with which to serve him. It is very commendable that you wish to emulate the Torah scholars and stay awake all night. However, you cannot forget about the abilities that Hashem gave you. Hashem blessed you with wealth, which means you have an obligation to help support the less fortunate. That is the post that Hashem designated for you. If you forsake it and change posts, then you are deserving of the death penalty. You must commit to fulfill the job given to you if you want to be meritorious in your judgment tomorrow."

TORAH RIDDLE

How is it possible to have more than a year between one Shavuot and the next one - even without a leap year?

Last week's riddle:

How is it possible for two people to be in the same room davening the same Shemoneh Esrei, with one being obligated to repeat it, while the other one is not obligated to repeat it?

Answer: 1) A person from chutz la'aretz is in Eretz Yisroel and on the last day of his Yom Tov (which is already chol for Eretz Yisroel inhabitants) davens a weekday davening like the Eretz Yisroel people. 2) An Eretz Yisroel person starts to say "vsain brocho" one day earlier than non-Eretz Yisroel people. If he will be in doubt whether he said "v'sain brocho" on the 31st day after starting - he will not need to repeat Shemoneh Esrei. However, if a non-Eretz Yisroel resident who is still within the 30 days will be in doubt if he said it, he will need to repeat Shemone Esrei.

Congratulations to: Shully Farkas, Naftoli Stoll

Please send your "Who Am I" and "Torah Riddle" answers to OnegShabbos@BeachwoodKollel.com by next Wednesday.

The answers will IY"Y appear in next week's issue

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