



# TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel



Parshas Bamidbar

May 14, 2021

## A Taste of Torah Torah Reborn

by Rabbi Chaim Yeshaya Freeman

The parsha open with Hashem's command to Moshe that he take a census of the Jewish People according to their tribes, counting all males above the age of twenty. The parsha then elaborates in great detail, listing the family names of each tribe. The parsha continues that the Tribe of Levi was not included in the census, but, rather, received their own count for all males thirty days and older.

Rashi offers two reasons as to why the Tribe of Levi was not included. The first reason is due to the fact that the Tribe of Levi was designated to be in charge of the service of the Temple, and so it is appropriate that they be singled out from the rest of the Jewish nation.

The second reason is because Hashem knew that all those who were part of the census would be included in the decree of dying in the desert following the Sin of the Spies. The Tribe of Levi, who did not participate in the Sin of the Golden Calf, were spared this decree by being excluded from this census.

While discussing the families and members of the tribe of Levi, the Torah states (Bamidbar 3:1-2), "These are the offspring of Aharon and Moshe on the day Hashem spoke with Moshe at Mt. Sinai. These are the names of the sons of Aharon, the firstborn was Nadav; and Avihu, Elazar, and Isamar." There are two obvious questions on this verse. First, the Torah declares these are the offspring of Aharon and Moshe, but it only lists the offspring of Aharon. Second, what is the purpose of the

words "on the day Hashem spoke with Moshe on Mt. Sinai"?

Rashi cites the teaching of the Talmud (Sanhedrin 19b) that says, based upon this verse, that whoever teaches his friend's son Torah is regarded as if he himself had fathered the child. Since Moshe taught Aharon's children Torah, they are considered his offspring. Rashi continues that this is also why the verse focuses on Hashem speaking with Moshe at Mt. Sinai, for it was through teaching Aharon's children the Torah he had received on Mt. Sinai that they were regarded as his own offspring.

At first glance, this whole idea seems strange. How is it possible that one's students are considered as his own through teaching them Torah?

This teaching can be better understood with another Talmudic teaching (Sanhedrin 99b) that anyone who teaches his friend's son Torah is regarded by Scripture as if he "made" him. This is derived from a verse regarding Avraham and Sara which states (Bereishis 12:5) "and the people they made in Charan." The Talmud explains that Avraham and Sara taught these people about Hashem, and were thus considered to have "made" them.

The Maharsha (ibid.) explains that a person, through the study of Torah, is elevated to the full status of "adam," the human who is the purpose and focal point of Creation. Avraham and Sara, by teaching these people about Hashem and his Torah (which they knew through their advanced spiritual development), thus "made"

continued on back

### Stories for the Soul

#### Travelling in Good Faith

A teenage boy studying in yeshiva was found with reading material not suitable for a yeshiva student. The school heads felt that his place was not in yeshiva, and that he should enroll in another type of school. The boy went to Rabbi Elazar Menachem Shach (1899-2001) to discuss the matter at the end of the winter semester.

Rav Shach asked to meet the boy before offering advice. He spoke to the student for a few minutes, and sensed that the student was having problems in *emuna* (faith in G-d).

After the boy had departed, Rav Shach indicated to the deans that he hoped that the student would straighten out over the spring intersession, but asked that the student meet with him during the break. The student lived in Tel Aviv, while Rav Shach lived in Bnei Brak, a city not far from Tel Aviv.

After Pesach, the boy's rebbi asked Rav Shach if the boy had come to see him. Rav Shach replied, "The boy did not have to come to me. I traveled twice to Tel Aviv to see him during the Pesach intersession. I hope that for the coming semester everything will, G-d willing, be in order."

At the outset of the next semester, the student approached his rebbi and informed him that he had no doubts in *emuna* at all. If the Jewish People, he said, could produce a person who is so caring that he actually traveled to Tel Aviv to see him twice, he doesn't have any more questions.

continued on back

## Kollel Happenings

### MILE HIGH TORAH PODCAST FROM THE KOLLEL

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### SPRING-SUMMER AVOS UBANIM ON SHABBOS AFTERNOON

The Kollel's spring-summer Avos Ubanim program continues this Shabbos afternoon at the Kollel Torah Centers in West Denver and Southeast Denver. Learning begins one hour before mincha, followed by nosh and prizes. For sponsorships and more info, email [info@denverkollel.org](mailto:info@denverkollel.org).

### BUILD YOUR LEGACY AND SECURE THE FUTURE OF TORAH WITH LIVE ON/LIFE & LEGACY

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## Halacha Riddles

**Last week's question:** How is it possible for a *bracha* of a fruit to change based on how the tree came into existence?

**Answer:** A fruit that grows wild and is not usually eaten requires a *shehakol* blessing (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 203:4 with Mishna Berura *ibid.*:5). If, however, one were to grow the tree for its fruit, a *bracha* of *ha'eitz*

would be made when it is eaten in its normal fashion (e.g., if it is normally eaten cooked, one would recite *ha'eitz* only when it is cooked) (Bi'ur Halacha 203:4).

**This week's question:** How is it possible for the *bracha* of an item to vary between *ha'adama* and *shehakol* based on why it was planted?

## Lives of Our Torah Leaders

### Rabbi Saadia Gaon - Part XXIX

Rav Saadia also wrote the first known *Azharos* (or *Azaharot*). *Azharos* contain the 613 mitzvos of the Torah; many different *Azharos* have been written by different Torah scholars throughout the ages, each in its own style and based upon the author's view of what is to be included in the count of the 613 mitzvos. *Azharos* are customarily recited on Shavuot night in some communities, especially among Sephardic Jewry. Rav Saadia's *Azharos* not only list the mitzvos but also explain how each mitzvah is connected to one of the *Aseres Hadibros* (Ten Commandments).

Rabbi Saadia passed away in 942 at

the age of 60. One of his sons, Rabbi Dosa, assumed the position of Gaon of the Sura Yeshiva from 928 until 942. Rav Saadia's eldest son, Sheerit, appears to have been a Torah scholar, as well.

Rav Saadia's impact on his era and on subsequent generations is enormous. His pioneering work on Hebrew grammar and lexicon blazed a trail for Jewish Torah scholars of future generations to create their own works in these areas, as well as religious poetry. His translation and commentary of the Torah made it readily available to all Jews.

## A Taste of Torah

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these people into the "adam" Hashem had intended for humanity. It can now be understood that teaching another Torah is tantamount to fathering that person, for the student is reborn into the status of *adam*.

These ideas illustrate the power of Torah, and give further insight into why it is entirely different from

studying other subjects. Immersing oneself in Torah study results in much more than gaining knowledge; it enables a person to achieve his purpose of being created. It also provides a new perspective on how to view those who engage in the teaching of Torah. A Torah teacher is not merely imparting Torah knowledge; he is creating lives!

## Stories for the Soul

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In this week's parsha, Hashem instructs Moshe to count the Jewish People. Every single individual is unique and

important, and we must relate to the inherent value of every person.

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